# THE MISSIONARY IDEA IN LIFE AND RELIGION

THE LIFE AND RELIGION SERIES

EDITED BY
FRANK K. SANDERS
AND
HENRY A. SHERMAN

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# THE MISSIONARY IDEA IN LIFE AND RELIGION

BY

J. F. McFADYEN, M.A., D.D.

FORMERLY PRINCIPAL OF HISLOP COLLEGE, NAGPUR, INDIA, AND SINCE 1920 PROFESSOR OF NEW TESTAMENT LITERATURE AND CRITICISM IN QUEEN'S THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE, KINGSTON, CANADA

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TO

MARION

# PREFACE

This volume seeks to discuss in a non-technical way the questions which arise in the minds of many intelligent men and women, both old and young, in regard to the missionary enterprise. Is it as truly a function of the Christian life as worship or service? Is it a personal responsibility or only a corporate one? Must one who wishes to consider his duties as a Christian dispassionately avoid or include an interest in the moral and spiritual concerns of other people? What kind of an interest is legitimate and what is illegitimate? How does a missionary spend his time; what does he hope to accomplish; what sustains him in his efforts, when confronted by political or social or other difficulties? What does the non-Christian think about it all? What permanent and useful results does missionary work show? Why should we contribute to it? What induces men and women to invest their lives in missionary work? After all, is it really worth while? Such questions as these are being turned over in the minds of many friendly but inquiring people in these days, when the whole world is becoming intimate in a way unrealized a generation ago and other peoples are no longer vaguely dismissed from mind as pagans, but recognized as beings whose interests closely parallel our own and whose thinking along the lines of religion may have some value for us.

There seems to be abundant room for a volume which deals with these questions and others like them in a frank, yet friendly, manner. The writer, Professor McFadyen, of Queen's Theological College, Kingston, Ontario, has been singularly well prepared in experi-

ence to interpret the mission enterprise to men and women of the present day. He studied at Glasgow; for twenty years he was a missionary of the United Free Church of Scotland at Nagpur, C. P., India. In view of his Indian experience, he was asked, in addition to his work on the New Testament, at Queen's, to undertake the Lectureship on Missions. He thus brings to his task the reading and study of many years.

It is hoped that the volume will strike a fresh note in the fairly extensive literature of to-day which seeks to interpret the larger grasp of religious idealism and opportunity which a world message implies. It is the keen desire of author and editors alike that it may help to draw more men and women into the fellowship of those who value life chiefly as an opportunity for passing on to others the deeper and finer values of the Christianity they profess.

THE EDITORS.

February, 1926.

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# THE MISSIONARY IDEA IN LIFE AND RELIGION

# THE MISSIONARY IDEA IN LIFE AND RELIGION

## I

## THE MISSIONARY IMPULSE IN LIFE

When the visitor from the West approaches the gateway of the East the first printed words that meet his eye are "Dewar's Whisky." They appear as a sky sign above the mole at the entrance to the harbor at Port Said, as if symbolically claiming for whiskey the same dominion over the Orient it has so long exercised in certain portions of the West.

When we speak of "missions" and "missionaries" we instinctively think of the men and women who have gone out from Christian countries as ambassadors of the cross. The sky sign at Port Said, like the sewing-machine that one sees in every Indian bazaar, is a reminder that it is not only enthusiasts for the message of Jesus that believe in missionary propaganda. At the very beginning of our study we come on a curious paradox. The very people who are whole-hearted supporters of the missionary ideal in the case of whiskey or the sewing-machine are in very many cases indifferent or hostile to the missionary enterprise represented by the church.

### 1. The Missionary Ideal in Religion a Minority Programme.

In that section of the church which is responsible for its missionary programme, it is a commonplace that, to the church, expansion is the very breath of life; that not merely must every thought and ambition of the

individual be brought into subjection to Christ, not merely every sphere of social and national life, but every region of the world. Axiomatic as this truth seems to many, it has been widely challenged. Perhaps the most effective challenge lies in the fact that, speaking generally, the missionary ideal has never been the ideal of the church. The missionary programme is carried out by minorities, often small minorities, by special missionary societies, and by professional missionaries; and in this the spread of Christianity is in sharp contrast to that of Mohammedanism.

To students of Christian missions one of the puzzling phenomena is the attitude of Western laymen in the mission fields. Few who know the facts would quarrel with the estimate that that attitude includes a certain amount of active help, a moderate degree of benevolent interest, a large measure of indifference and ignorance, and a certain admixture of hostility. An analysis of the critical position that so many European and American exiles take up toward the missionary work of the church in their neighborhood may be postponed. In the meantime we note that most of them are themselves missionaries.

### 2. This Ideal in Other Spheres Quite Common.

The only justification for the position the British have so long occupied in India is the fact that the members of the Civil Services have been political missionaries, convinced that they could govern India better than the Indians could govern themselves. The present political difficulties of the British in India are largely due to a decision made by them in the time of Lord Macaulay. The government of the day thought that the culture of the West was a richer and finer thing than the culture of the East; and believed that it

was therefore their duty to send out educational missionaries to the schools and colleges of India. As a result of this decision, generation after generation of Indian youth, right down to our own day, has been taught the science, the philosophy, the economics, and the literature of the West.

For the Indian pack-bullock we have substituted the bicycle, the railway train, and the motor-car. Indian forest paths or trackless jungles have, under European engineers, given way to a magnificent system of roads. Western factories have largely replaced the hand looms at the same time that cotton piece-goods from the West were largely replacing the products of these hand looms. We have taught young India to play lawn tennis, cricket, football, and ground hockey; in some cases to play them superbly well. Indians conduct their anti-British propaganda largely in the English language, which the British have taught them, and through newspapers conducted on Western models and published under Western conceptions of the liberty of the press. They reach their political meetings on Western railroads or by Western automobiles. The very ideal they have in view, self-government under representative institutions, is a Western ideal.

The diseases that take such an appalling toll of Indian life are largely Oriental; the methods of fighting them, in so far as they are effective, are largely imported from the West. India's famines have seemed to be part of her destiny. It was left to Britain to show how even a famine, affecting hundreds of thousands of square miles and scores of millions of people, could be fought with the loss of hardly a single life. It seems safe to say that no country, entrusted with the destinies of another, has a finer record of achievement to show than the British Government in India in its long

struggle with India's ever-recurring famines. If Britain has not succeeded in ending the appalling mortality from malarial fever, cholera, and plague, her medical men have at least shown how, if the people heartily co-operated and if sufficient funds were available, the death roll might be materially reduced and some of the worst epidemic scourges might be shorn of their terrors.

By the work of British engineers deserts have been turned into gardens, and districts which formerly collapsed at the first breath of famine have become granaries whose superfluity in hard times helps to make up for the deficiency of less favored tracts.

Western physicians, administrators, educational experts, and engineers who work elsewhere than in the West are all missionaries. By their very presence in the countries to which they go they say in effect: "Our ways are better than yours. We do not doubt you could go in your old ways, but we do not wish to see you do so. We bring you light that we think you need."

### 3. Wise Administrators Uphold Moral and Religious Ideals.

Again, all British administrators in India, and yet more British magistrates, are missionaries of a moral ideal, the ideal of absolute justice between man and man. One has seen an Indian play, written by an Indian and acted by Indians, of which the moral was that every person concerned, from the presiding magistrate down to the court janitor, had been bribed. It has been generally recognized that Britain has stood for the principle that in the law courts truth must prevail, irrespective of the caste or the social position of the parties concerned.

Not only so, but the task of the administrator in India, in one important aspect of it, is a religious mis-

sion. In dealing with those epidemic diseases that periodically decimate whole districts, or with those agricultural disasters that so often blight the hopes of the farmers, it is more than half the battle to change the theological orientation of the people, to induce them to cease the despairing cry, "It is the will of God," with which Hindu and Mahommedan alike are so fond of justifying their resignation to adverse circumstances.

### 4. It Is not Only Christian Ideals That Arouse Opposition.

Nor can the missionaries of administration, of education, of sanitation, of irrigation, adopt the plea that the benefits they confer are obvious while the useful achievements of Christian missions are disputable. In recent years by far the most influential of all the anti-British leaders in India has been Mr. Gandhi. His fight is not altogether against British rule, hardly at all against Christian missions. To him the enemy is modern civilization; the work of the missionaries of Western ideals in law, medicine, engineering, and industry. Railways bring together places that God meant to be separate. Lawyers are parasites who batten on the foibles of their fellows. If men were left to endure the results of excess, they would mend their ways; as it is, they go to the doctor, who patches them up, so that they can return like the dog to its vomit. Hand industry must undo the injury that factories and steam power have wrought. What the cross is to the Christian, that the spinning-wheel is to the "Mahatma."

### 5. Truth Is Something to be Shared.

We have chosen the work of the British in India as one of the most obvious exemplifications of the mis-

sionary attitude to life; but it is only one illustration out of many that would strike us more forcibly were we not so familiar with them. The work done in Germany in the spread of nationalist ideals, the foreign propaganda of the Russian Soviets, and the educational activities of the labor parties of Europe and America are even more familiar examples of an intense desire on the part of large groups for converts to new ideas, and of the success with which such missionary movements can be conducted if there is sufficient enthusiasm behind them. Nor is it necessary to take such large-scale illustrations of the thesis that, just as we are all socialists nowadays, so we are all missionaries. Every author who publishes a book, every inventor who takes out a patent, the explorer who describes his travels, the man of science who announces his discoveries, the journal of every society for the advancement of any branch of knowledge, bears testimony to the general belief that truth is meant to be shared.

### 6. Is Religion an Exception?

Is it, then, we are led to ask, something peculiar in the nature of *religious* truth that makes inapplicable in this sphere the general desire to share with all mankind the best we have? One has heard a large audience of Hindus cheer to the echo a statement of Mrs. Annie Besant that the Hindus have never proselytized. Is there any other subject than religion in connection with which the expression of such a sentiment would have called forth such a response? One need not stop to inquire how far the self-contained character of Hinduism is connected with the caste system and its petrifaction of existing relations, how far with the pessimism that long ago settled on Hindu thought. It is at least true that Hinduism to-day shows no sign of spread-

ing, or of any desire to spread, beyond the confines of India; though in the past it has shown a wonderful power of absorption within India, having in fact driven out all rivals except monotheistic religions. But if Hinduism, like Confucianism, seems peculiarly adapted to be a national religion, and ill adapted to spread far beyond its own borders, Judaism, Mohammedanism, and Buddhism have not merely cherished the ambition, but have at times shown an astonishing capacity, to widen the geographical area of their influence.

On a broad view, then, of the attitude of leaders of thought and action to nations other than their own, it is not the Christian missionary who is put on his defence, but the man who looks askance at the missionary activities of the church. If the church did not send ambassadors to all the world, the obvious inference would be that in her belief in her message, in her enthusiasm for the cause she stands for, she falls far below, not only the devotees of the most spiritual of the non-Christian religions, but even the most serious students of science, art, and literature, the most earnest representatives of education, commerce, industry, and politics. The only religion that has ever vindicated its claim to be a world religion needs no apology for fulfilling its vocation.

## II

## THE MISSIONARY IDEA IN THE GOSPELS

### 1. The New Testament a Volume of Missionary Literature.

The missionary idea was inseparably bound up with the Christian religion from the very beginning. So far as we can see, had the propagating of the "good news" not been felt from the first as an urgent duty, not only would there have been no Christian church, but, granted the existence of a church, it would have had no New Testament. The Synoptic Gospels are obviously, in part at least, the result of missionary preaching and teaching, and include instruction given to catechumens. The Acts of the Apostles is a record of the early expansion of the church, in particular of the missionary activities of Paul. Paul's epistles are the letters of a missionary to his converts and other members of the young churches, dealing with the problems, theoretical and practical, that arise where Christians are facing an untried situation. Some of the difficulties that arose, for example, in the church of Corinth were just those with which the missionary of to-day has to deal. Among them were problems connected with the marriage relation and with customs that involved idolatry; with the machinery for settling contested claims and for preserving the Christian standard of conduct; with the nature and use of spiritual endowments and the intelligent and reverent celebration of the Lord's Supper. It is hardly too much to say that from beginning to end the New Testament is a volume of missionary literature.

### 2. Jesus an Indefatigable Missionary.

Our Lord never thought of Himself as a teacher with instruction to impart to any one who might care to listen. He had an urgent message from God, a message which he must at all costs deliver, not only to eager hearers but also to the lukewarm and the indifferent. So vital were the issues that hung on men's acceptance of it, that, to bring it home to them, he endured hunger, weariness, and peril. He "evangelized" the towns and villages of Galilee. Mark speaks of work on, and perhaps beyond, the northern boundary of Galilee, and represents Jesus as making the last journey to Jerusalem through Peræa to the east of the Jordan. The Fourth Gospel has the conversation of Jesus with the woman of Samaria, and Luke hints at a thwarted mission to the Samaritans on the final journey to Jerusalem. Much of the Fourth Gospel is occupied with the record of Jesus' visits to Judea, on which until recently the Synoptic Gospels were believed to be silent. But as the critical study of the records proceeds, it is becoming clearer that even the Synoptic Gospels imply a ministry to Judea far longer and more effective than was formerly supposed.

### 3. Jesus' Attitude to the Gentile World.

The question has sometimes been seriously raised whether Jesus thought of himself as inaugurating a world mission or even a Gentile mission. We have to grant that on this point the records are not quite so clear as might have been desired, and that our knowledge of Jesus' attitude to the Gentile world is largely a matter of inference. There is, however, such a thing as inference that amounts to certainty. It is hardly credible that one who knew and loved the Old Testament as

Jesus did, who had such an unerring and discriminating intuition for its spiritual message at its loftiest levels, should on this subject have had a more restricted vision than some of the Old Testament seers.

Jesus knew the story of Nineveh, the great heathen city that repented at the preaching of the reluctant Jonah. He must have read the idyll of Ruth. "Ruth is a Moabitess, and the book sweetly urges that such a woman as she, with her loving heart and her resolve to take Israel's God for her God (1 : 16), is an Israelite indeed, and ought to be gladly given her place within the community of Jehovah worshippers." [1] The beginning of the second chapter of Isaiah may have been in the mind of Jesus when he sought to cleanse the Temple and make it once more God's house of prayer. "It shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge between the nations, and shall reprove many peoples: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks."

That the selection of the sayings of Jesus and the incidents of his ministry preserved in our Gospels was influenced by the problems that faced the early church is not merely probable in itself, but seems to be borne out by a study of the facts. It seems certain that, in the sharp controversy between those who thought of the gospel as for Jews only, and those who believed

[1] J. E. McFadyen, *Interest of the Bible*, p. 109.

that the church had a world mission, every word and action of Jesus that bore on the question would be cherished and recorded. Exponents of the orthodox Jewish Christian view would point to the small place occupied in the story by any ministry beyond the confines of Palestine, to Jesus' apparent unwillingness to accede to the petition of the Syrophenician woman, and to the injunction to the Twelve to confine the proclamation strictly to Jews, avoiding not only the Gentiles but even the Samaritans.

### 4. "To the Jew First."

However universal our Lord's message may have been in essence, yet, in the form in which he clothed it, especially perhaps in the earlier days of his ministry, if it would not have been unintelligible to Gentiles, at least it would have needed interpreting to them as it did not to the Jews. At every turn, in his own nation, he had points of attachment for his teaching. A people nurtured on the Old Testament might stand in need of instruction about the Kingdom of God, but they needed no definition, and apparently they received none. The beatitudes are expressed almost entirely in Old Testament language. Some of Jesus' thoughts on ethics are set against the background of Mosaic prescription or Pharisaic practice.

Opinions may differ as to the extent to which Jesus' conception of his mission, and the general purport of his teaching, were influenced by the expectation that the world in its existing form was about to pass away; but it seems fairly clear that the thought of an imminent judgment, based on Jewish eschatological expectations, colored at least the language in which he conveyed his message. All this helps to explain why, as a matter of practical procedure, the gospel should be proclaimed

not to the Jew exclusively, but to "the Jew first," to a prepared people.

### 5. Jesus' Anti-Gentile Bias Only Apparent.

The words forbidding the Twelve to approach Gentiles or Samaritans occur only in Matthew's Gospel, which seems in places to be colored by the feeling of the Jewish Christian section of the church. They occur moreover in a section of that Gospel which is wrapped in some obscurity (Matthew 10). Jesus apparently believed that a crisis in the mission had arisen, and that there was urgent need for haste. (See v. 23: Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come.) There is no real ground for supposing that there was even momentarily an anti-Gentile or anti-Samaritan bias.

In the story of the Syrophenician woman, the words ascribed to Jesus in the King James version, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 15 : 24), are thus translated by Cureton from the famous Syriac manuscript which he discovered: "I am not sent but after those flocks which have strayed from the house of Israel." In verse 26 it has been suggested that what Jesus actually said was, "It is not seemly to take the bread which the sons fling to the dogs" (which may be a reference to a popular proverb warning against begging), a somewhat bitter saying called forth by the readiness of a Gentile to receive him when his own people were rejecting him. Even on the ordinary reading, the story may reflect a grave struggle taking place in Jesus' own mind, a reconsideration of the whole question of confining his work to the unresponsive people of Palestine, when there were so many in the wider world that would hear him gladly.

### 6. Jesus' Real Attitude Shown in His Ministry.

We get the real attitude of Jesus, not by looking at this or that word, the bearing of which, owing to the scantiness of the record, may be imperfectly understood; but by standing back and looking at the whole impression made by a study of his ministry. It was an age of barriers, of social, racial, and religious exclusiveness; an age in which Romans and Greeks despised barbarians, when Jews thought Gentiles outside the pale and had no dealings with Samaritans; when foods and people alike were divided into "clean" and "unclean"; when the Pharisee thanked God that he was not like the tax-gatherer, and men marvelled if a religious teacher were seen talking with a woman. Jesus showed himself not so much triumphant over, as oblivious of, these distinctions. In his presence all adventitious trappings fell off, and men and women stood revealed as the men and women that they were.

The spell of the parables lies partly in this, that in them there is so little that is temporal and local. The sower was a farmer, not specifically a Palestinian farmer. Who ever thinks of the father of the prodigal as a Jew? In the parable of the Good Samaritan, it is one of the points that we know nothing of the race, religion or social status of the victim of the robbers, and the selection of a Samaritan as the hero of the story was a challenge to Jewish religious pride. Jesus loved the Old Testament stories such as that of Naaman, of the widow of Zarephath, of the Queen of Sheba and the repentant Ninevites, that tell of a great human brotherhood that ignores the fences with which men seek to shut off others from themselves, fences which they fondly hope represent something in the mind of God. We are only now learning something of

that spirit which Jesus showed in contact with those of other races and other faiths. There was never a suggestion of proselytizing, of contempt, of emphasis on the things that separated them from his people. He met them, not as outsiders, but as children of the common Father, and recognized to the full every response they made to the Father's leading.

**7. The Resurrection Missionary Commission.**

Many have felt doubts about the commission given, according to Matthew's Gospel (28 : 19), by the risen Jesus to the Eleven to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." The possibility of the literal historical accuracy of such verbal instructions will depend on the nature of the resurrection appearances of Jesus; a subject on which the New Testament references, and even the Gospel accounts of the resurrection manifestations, leave room for a variety of views.

On any theory, the commission is surely a correct interpretation of the whole attitude of Jesus to men. One of the most characteristic words of Jesus is that in which he pictures God as the most hospitable of hosts, keeping open door and applying to candidates for admission to his great feast none of those purblind tests with which men restrict the circle of their friends. The different versions of the parable of the great supper (Matthew 22 : 1–10; Luke 14 : 15–24) suggest that early Christian preachers may have adapted the story to suit different circumstances. But the picture of the host who would have his table full, whatever boorishness the invited guests might show, bears the unmistakable impress of the artist who saw into the mind of God as no other has done. Even if, in Luke's judgment,

the prodigal, for whose return the father waited with anxious longing, represented only the tax-gatherers and "sinners" of Palestine—and it is by no means certain that that is his judgment—it is a narrow interpretation that does less than justice to the wonderful story.

## III

## THE MISSIONARY IDEA IN THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

The story of the early history of the church is wrapped in considerable obscurity; but several pertinent facts seem to stand out clearly.

### 1. Early Missionary Activity.

In the very first years after the crucifixion, there must have been a wide-spread and successful missionary activity among the followers of Jesus. Paul's persecution of the Christians, which may have followed the death of Jesus at a very short interval, could have shown the virulence it did, only if the Christians were growing in numbers and in influence and seemed likely to become a real menace to the Jewish faith. We hear of Christians at Damascus; we can only guess how they came to be there. At a later time we know there were Christians in Rome, long before Paul wrote to them; we know nothing of how the gospel reached Rome. The vague hints which are our only source of information suggest that the first rapid and remarkable spread of the "good news" depended largely on unknown individual Christians, often fleeing from persecution, each of them an unofficial, sometimes doubtless almost an unconscious, missionary.

### 2. The Controversy Over the Reception of Gentile Converts.

At a comparatively early date the church was sharply divided on the question whether the Christian religion

was simply a reformed Judaism, in which the only distinctively new note was that Jesus was the Messiah, or whether it had altogether burst the bonds of Judaism, and was now to be a world religion, offering salvation to all without restriction of race. The fact that such a controversy should have arisen, and that among the chief exponents of the broader view were Paul and others who had not known Jesus during his lifetime, is one of the greatest difficulties in the way of accepting the Great Commission at the end of Matthew's Gospel as a message actually spoken to the disciples by the risen Jesus.

Perhaps the simplest explanation is that, while the world scope of the "good news," as Jesus understood it, was implicit in his life and teaching, he seldom or never made it explicit, in a form which the spiritually obtuse could not misunderstand. The variety in the conceptions of his mission held even by his intimate friends is hardly more surprising than the small minority of his professed followers who, after nineteen centuries of Christian triumph, have any interest in the world mission of the church.

Strictly speaking, this was not the form in which the controversy arose. Judaism too had its missionary propaganda, sometimes apparently of a particularly zealous quality; it had won striking successes in far distant parts of the world. Philo tells us that there were a million Jews in Egypt alone. Besides the proselytes who accepted the full yoke of the law, but who could never in their own lifetime become full Jews, there was the much larger outer circle known as "the God-fearers," the men who were attracted by the loftiness of the Jewish conception of God, and the purity of Jewish faith and ethic, but who either had scruples about certain articles in the ceremonial law, or, like so

many converts in modern mission fields, were unwilling to pay the price of social and religious separation from their own people.

That the gospel should be preached to Gentiles was in itself, for those who inherited the Jewish tradition, no startling innovation; the Jews had their own missionary propaganda. But that even a "God-fearer" like Cornelius should, as soon as he believed, receive the Holy Spirit, be baptized, and be entitled to full membership in the religious community, this was indeed a new thing in Israel. It was round this subject, rather than on the mere right to evangelize Gentiles, that the controversy arose. The question was whether a non-Jew, on becoming a Christian, inherited all the obligations of the Jewish law. A religion which had for its only gateway, in the case of men, the degrading ceremony of circumcision, and whose votaries were prevented by certain food tabus from eating with men of other faiths, could never aspire to be a world religion. From the day when the church recognized that "also to the Gentiles has God granted the repentance that brings life" the universal mission of Christianity became a practicable ideal.

### 3. The Men Who Delivered Christianity from Judaism.

The assertion has been made, and significance has been attached to it, that, to begin with at least, the Gentile mission was conducted by leaders who had not belonged to the disciple circle, and who, so far as we know, had not come into contact with Jesus during his lifetime. It is claimed that our records show that the first enthusiasts for the world mission of Christianity were men like Stephen, Philip, and Paul rather than Peter and John. The suggestion has been made that this explains why, during an early persecution, the

apostles were able to remain unmolested in Jerusalem, while the other Christian leaders had to flee (Acts 8:1). They confined their mission to the Jews, and still thought of themselves and were regarded by others as Jews, albeit with an important difference; and so could, after the first temporary outbreak of opposition, go about their mission as they conceived it, without hindrance; whereas the Hellenist Christians, frankly ignoring the racial barriers erected by the Jews, were recognized by them as enemies of the faith, to be crushed by them at all costs—if need be, to be exterminated.

This seems a large deduction to draw from the very meagre evidence at our disposal.[1] Whatever the motive that inspired the composition of the Acts of the Apostles, it was certainly not written to give a full account of the early days of the church. It was not unnatural that Jews of the Dispersion, when they became Christians, should be quicker to recognize the emancipating element in the religion of Jesus than the Jews of Palestine. But, as we have seen, the controversy that nearly split the infant church in two was not on the question of the right or duty of preaching to the Gentiles, but on the terms on which Gentile Christians could be received into the church.

In Paul's first-hand account of the dispute in the Epistle to the Galatians, he tells us that the "pillar apostles" readily consented that Paul and Barnabas should conduct a mission to the uncircumcised. In this epistle Peter is accused, not of a narrow religious outlook, but of timidity, of a sort of "two-facedness." Whatever the details of the controversy, the victory

[1] In *Saint Paul and the Jerusalem Church*, p. 45, Wilfrid Knox suggests that the apostles were personally unknown to the Hellenists who conducted the persecution and so remained unrecognized.

was complete for the party that maintained that the gospel was for mankind, without let or limitation. In the later books of the New Testament, the echoes of the once keen discussion have died away. No reader of the Epistle to the Hebrews, for example, from a perusal of it alone, could guess that the question of the admission of Gentile Christians to the church had ever been raised.

**4. Christianity's Complete Delocalization.**

The divorce of Christianity from Judaism was important in more ways than one. One secret of the strength of the early Christian movement was just that, while the Christian leaders seem to have been anxious, as far as possible, to preserve correct relations with the state, yet the Christians had now a wider loyalty than to any terrestrial state. It was to the heavenly Jerusalem, not the earthly, that the Christians looked. According to the Acts of the Apostles, the leaders of the Jerusalem church in the early days tended to claim for Jerusalem the same authoritative place in the Christian church it had so long held in the Jewish.

The destruction of Jerusalem was no unmixed catastrophe even for the Jews, since they learned once more one of the lessons of the exile—that their religion could flourish apart from the Temple and the sacred city. For the Christians, however, the danger of localized views of God, and of a localized concentration of religious authority, was, for the time being at least, over long before the year 70. While there was from the beginning one Christian Church, yet from their foundation the Pauline churches were encouraged to live each its own independent life.

### 5. Why Were the New Testament Churches not Urged to Evangelize?

Each new church founded would then become a new centre of missionary activity. In view of this fact, it is surprising that we hardly ever find in the epistles of the New Testament an appeal to the readers to evangelize their non-Christian neighbors, an appeal such as the missionaries of to-day constantly make to the mission churches. It is not quite easy to see the significance of this. The belief in the imminent end of the world must have made any such aim as "the evangelization of the world in this generation" seem almost chimerical. There may have been the feeling too that the work of winning converts was the preserve of the apostles and of the recognized or even ordained leaders, like Paul and Barnabas. Paul does not write to the Christians of Corinth as if he thought them fit to instruct others; and the recipients of the Epistle to the Hebrews are frankly told that, while men who have been so long in the church ought to be ready to teach, in fact they are themselves at the milk diet stage.

Yet the church leaders knew that the good news spreads in other ways than by formal instruction from official teachers. Thus, in I Peter, Christian women are reminded that men who refuse to listen to preaching, may, without a word of teaching, be won over by the chaste, reverent, submissive lives of their wives. The extraordinarily rapid spread of the gospel in the early days was God's own commentary on Jesus' parables of life and growth, that had become part of the heritage of the churches.

### 6. The New Testament Gospel Essentially a Universal Message.

We may sum up our study of the missionary idea in the New Testament in the statement that the conception of the Christian church as a body of people who know a number of comforting truths, truths which they are under no obligation to share with others, wherever such a conception came from, is quite foreign to the New Testament. The gospel, which is the message of the New Testament, is typified by the leaven of the parable, a power which by its very nature spreads irresistibly and subdues to itself all that it touches. Within a generation of the crucifixion "Go ye into all the world" was universally recognized as a true interpretation of the mind of Christ.

# IV

## THE MISSIONARY IDEA IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

### 1. The Early History of Missions Generally Unfamiliar.

Even among people who have made some study of the missionary enterprise, there is often an impression that the movement which began with Carey at the end of the eighteenth century was a completely new departure. A little reflection would show that this could not have been the case. Even the East India Company in its early years allowed, or even encouraged, its chaplains to take an interest in the religious welfare of the Indians with whom they came into contact.

For this general ignorance of the history of missions prior to the nineteenth century, there are several reasons. We like to associate the spread of the gospel with the names of great missionaries; but in the early centuries the pioneer work of the church was done largely by simple men and women who have left no traces. Of hardly one missionary of the second century, for example, do we know even the name. For various reasons much of the ground once won in Africa, in the Near East, and the Far East was afterward lost and had to be regained; so that there are long gaps in the history.

In the Protestant Church the period for two centuries after the Reformation was largely barren of missionary effort. In the Middle Ages, and down almost to our own day, many of the most devoted, heroic, and

successful missionaries were members of the Roman brotherhoods, the story of whose achievements is largely unknown in Protestant circles, save to experts. The elements of truth in the common idea that missions began to be in the nineteenth century are that during the last century the church has recognized its mission of world evangelization with a new enthusiasm, persistence, and thoroughness; and that world conditions have made possible, as never before, the fulfilment within a measurable time of the ideal of the preaching of the gospel to all the world.

**2. Factors in the Rapid Spread of the Early Church.**

Harnack, after a careful study of the question, agrees that, in the early centuries, Christianity spread with inconceivable rapidity. This statement is not inconsistent with the fact that, for some generations, tested by numerical standards, the church made no imposing display. In the nature of the case its advance in number of adherents must have tended to take the form of a geometrical progression, in which kind of series the smallness of the earlier numbers is always deceptive. In the first Christian generations the spread of the gospel was largely the work of men like Paul who had been specially set apart as missionaries. Presumably to some extent from the beginning, certainly in large measure before long, the leavening agency was the church itself, the church as a brotherhood, and the men and women who made up its membership.

The Christians won adherents for the faith not only by their public and private proclamation of their allegiance to Jesus. They persuaded men by the lives they lived and the deaths they died—women as well as men—by the purity of their morals, and by the lively and self-sacrificing interest they had in each other's

welfare, as shown in the unstinted and fearless help they gave in trouble, in persecution, in imprisonment, and in times of epidemic disease. The unanimous witness of the church was itself a powerful testimony to the faith. In the early centuries the church in an astonishing way rose to the vocation which Jesus had marked out for her of being the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

Then, as now, what distinguished the Christian faith from any mere philosophy or system of ethics was that it gave people power to be what all good men and women wish to be. The church in those days fulfilled its mission, largely because its members knew the price that had to be paid and were willing to pay it. The distinction between the church and the world was far more clear-cut than it is in the Western world to-day; and Christians realized that, if the faith was not to perish, they must come out and be separate, whatever it might cost them.

### 3. Some Historical Data.

In the age preceding Constantine, Asia Minor was the outstanding Christian country. Palestine as a whole, and especially the Jewish element in it, steadily resisted attempts at Christianization. Armenia was officially Christian before the Roman Empire became nominally Christian. Harnack calculates that there were at least thirty thousand Christians in Rome before the middle of the third century. By the end of the third century Christianity was diffused throughout Spain. The magnitude of the church in North Africa may be gauged by the fact that, by the beginning of the fourth century, there may have been as many as two hundred and fifty bishops in that region, a number which seems to have been multiplied by two or three

during that century. Britain may have had missionary work before the end of the second century, though it was not really Christianized until the fourth.

In the fourth century Constantine paid tribute to the preeminent position Christianity had attained by, in effect, making it the official religion of the empire. Thenceforward for some centuries the main missionary task of the church, a work in which the Irish churches took a distinguished part, was the conversion of Europe. Christendom suffered heavy losses from Mohammedanism, which began its militant career early in the seventh century. Mohammed's knowledge of the Christian religion, however perverted the form of it which he knew, is one of various indications that Christianity was wide-spread in Arabia by the year 600; but it was completely rooted out of the country by the advance of Mohammedanism. The complete extirpation of Christianity from North Africa, which had played so prominent a part in the earlier history of the church, is one of the saddest stories in the history of the Christian faith.

The crusading centuries, whatever they may have accomplished for Christianity in other ways, did little to extend the borders of Christendom. Missionary history from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century is largely the story of the labors, often the heroic labors, of the Dominicans, Franciscans, and Jesuits, particularly in the New World. The outburst of missionary activity that began in the Protestant Church at the end of the eighteenth century is reminiscent of the first age in its enthusiasm, and far exceeds the first age in the completeness of the organization involved, the variety of the methods employed, and the extent of territory covered.

### 4. Christianity in the Far East.

A severe persecution of Christians of the Persian Empire took place in 343. There is evidence for the existence of Christian churches in India in the sixth century and possibly long before; and there has apparently been a Christian church in India through all the centuries since. There is some reason to believe that the form of Buddhism which prevailed in China was due to very early Christian influence. After the banishment of Nestorius in the early fifth century by the Council of Ephesus, his followers spread over a large part of Central Asia, carrying their faith with them. Cabul and Peking, among other places, became headquarters of ecclesiastical districts.

A Jesuit mission which reached China before the end of the sixteenth century found few traces of the Nestorian or of the later Franciscan mission, and the work had to be begun again. It is claimed that in 1669 there were over three hundred thousand baptized Christians, though the number steadily declined in the eighteenth century.

As a result of the labors of Juan Fernandez, Francis Xavier, and others, there were hundreds of thousands of Christians in Japan before the end of the sixteenth century. Later, largely as the result of horrible persecutions, Christianity was practically exterminated in that country.

### 5. Objectionable Missionary Methods.

All down through the centuries the work of extending the borders of the church was conducted with varying motives and by widely differing methods. From the fourth century down almost to our own day, the use of political power was very generally believed to be

a legitimate missionary weapon, while physical force played a large part in the conversion of Europe. Raymond Lull, the first missionary to the Mohammedans, was an honorable exception to the belief in the employment of this method, the use of which was due in part to the influence of Augustine, who advocated the death penalty for those who refused to accept the Christian faith. In the sixteenth century, to aid him in his work in India, Xavier obtained from the King of Portugal power to punish by death the makers of idols.

Missionaries have sometimes tried to simplify their task by the offer of material inducements. It is a little disconcerting to read in an extract from the diary of a certain Van Riebeek, written at Cape Town in 1658: "To stimulate the slaves to attention while at school, and to induce them to learn the Christian prayers, they were promised each a glass of brandy and two inches of tobacco when they finish their task." [1] In the last decade of the last century in the Chota Nagpur district of India many converts of the Lutheran mission and of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel were induced to join the Roman Catholic Church by the offer of loans, which were to be regarded as gifts so long as they remained Catholics.

### 6. The Comparative Unimportance of Methods.

The history of missions suggests that the modern emphasis on method somewhat exaggerates its importance. Historically, the particular door by which converts enter the church seems to be a matter of less moment than the training given to them and especially to their children when they have entered. For example, toward the end of the eighth century Charlemagne completed the Christianization of the Frankish Empire

[1] Robinson, *History of Christian Missions*, p. 19.

by a protracted and bloody conquest of the Saxons in the northeast corner of the empire, and by the wholesale deportation of irreconcilables. Yet, when once the broken Saxons had accepted Christianity, they became among the stanchest Christians of the German tribes and were a great strength to the work of the Reformation. The destruction of the flourishing Christian Church in Japan in the sixteenth century does not seem to have been due primarily to Xavier's custom of baptizing people who understood only imperfectly what Christianity meant. Nor was it altogether due to persecution; or rather, the Christians were persecuted, not as Christians, but because the Japanese Christians became involved in politics through a Japanese military dictator playing them off against his Buddhist enemies, and because the dependence of the Japanese churches on a foreign pope aroused Japanese suspicion.

Again, the rapid diminution of the number of nominal Christians in Ceylon which took place after the British introduced religious toleration at the end of the eighteenth century seems to have been due primarily, neither to the forcible methods of conversion used by the Roman Catholics in the sixteenth century, nor to the prohibition of the Roman Catholic rites on pain of death decreed by the Dutch, when they expelled the Portuguese in the middle of the seventeenth century, but rather to the ignorance in which the converts were for the most part left. However this may be, the Christian conscience of our day is in accord with the true genius of Christianity in its strong feeling that only a voluntary and intelligent acceptance of the Christian faith has any religious value, and that even absolutely voluntary mass movements into the church may be a source of real danger, unless the converts can receive adequate instruction in Christian faith and ethics.

### 7. The Method of the Unjust Steward.

To a certain type of mind at some periods in the history of the church, a more insidious danger has been the temptation to resort to that subtle form of bribery which consists in lowering the ethical claims of the gospel. If, before the close of the third century, Christianity smoothed its path by accepting a cultus of saints and angels that was hardly distinguishable from worship, and sanctioning the use of relics as instruments of miracle, a great price had to be paid in later ages in the debased forms of the Christian religion that so widely prevailed. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, Robert di Nobili, an Italian Jesuit, introduced the custom, which most Roman Catholic missionaries, at least in South India, have since retained, of allowing converts to keep in the church the caste they had as Hindus. By this device he thought to evade one of the greatest difficulties of the Indian missionary, but the evasion was at the expense of the teaching of the brotherhood of man, which is one of the glories of the Christian faith.

With similar motives the Capuchin friars permitted polygamy on the Congo, in the seventeenth century. At the end of that century, the missionary Zucchelli called the Christians of this district "baptized heathen, who have nothing of Christianity about them but the bare name." It will never be the men most worth winning that will be attracted by such methods, and those who are allured by the bait of an easy Christianity will be a burden to the churches and never a support. It is a mistake, too, to think that Christianity is the only religion that makes hard demands on its followers. When the forty days' fast of the Mohammedan Ramadan, which forbids the partaking not only

of food but of water between sunrise and sunset, occurs in the hot weather, as it sometimes does, it is a severe test of loyalty. Nor is circumcision an attractive ceremony.

### 8. Language Mastery an Important Factor.

It is now a very generally accepted principle of missionary work that the missionary should learn the language of the people to whom he ministers, even when, as in the case of missionaries engaged in the work of higher education, he is also teaching them his own. One feature of Xavier's work which greatly detracted from the effectiveness of his devoted labors was that, in India as in Japan, he made no attempt to learn any vernacular, but depended entirely on interpreters, who might or might not understand his language (Portuguese). One reason why it was possible for Christianity to disappear so completely from Northwest Africa, where in the fifth century it had so strong a hold, was that apparently the Bible was not translated into the language of the majority of the inhabitants.

### 9. Factors That Make for Permanence To-day.

If one lesson of the history of the church is that only an intelligent, enthusiastic church is a living church, another is the extent to which the life of the church depends on the life of the home. Our confidence that the mission churches of our day will escape the blight of impermanence which rested on so much of the results of the work of an earlier day, lies partly in the widely recognized ideal that in each nation the church must be indigenous, self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating, with a trained native clergy conducting the church service in the vernacular and the people reading the Scriptures in the vernacular. But it lies

almost more in the knowledge that practically all over the world women missionaries are working side by side with men, and are laying strong and sure the foundations of the Christian home, which is the best guarantee of the permanence of the Christian faith.

Churches and Christians may make mistakes and will suffer for their mistakes. The history of the progress of Christianity has not been one of uniform advance; but the impression its story leaves on the mind is that Jesus was right in comparing the kingdom of heaven to leaven; that the power of God's truth and God's love revealed in Jesus will work irresistibly, subduing ever new groups of men and ever new regions of thought and life, till the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

## V

## A CONSIDERATION OF SOME OBJECTIONS TO THE MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE

Even among people who are Christian in no merely conventional sense, doubts are sometimes felt about the validity of the foreign enterprise of the church.

### 1. The Worth of the Non-Christian Religions.

In our age more is known than in any previous age of the nature and worth of the non-Christian religions. It is true that more intimate contact with the other peoples of the earth has shown that preconceived opinions of their religions were not always wrong. There are multitudes in Africa, for example, whose religion, if we can use the term, is inexpressibly degrading. We are apt to forget also that even in India there are vast numbers for whom India's religious heritage is hardly even a name, who in the things of the spirit have hardly risen above the level of the more backward African races.

Yet the study of the last century has done much to reveal to the Western church hitherto unsuspected depths of insight and riches of spiritual thought and achievement in some of the world religions. It is astonishing to us that those who went before us could contemplate, not only with equanimity, but with satisfaction, a world throughout its greater part sunk, as it seemed to them, in absolute ignorance of the living God. To us the problem is not, how God could grant a twilight of truth even to "the Gentiles," but how the existence of the terror, the ignorance, the anguish, that

seem inseparable from so many primitive religions, is compatible with belief in the God who is light and in whom is no darkness at all.

**2. The Uniqueness of Christianity Questioned.**

Not only has the study of the non-Christian faiths destroyed the superstition that the condition of "heathendom" is that of unrelieved spiritual darkness; the same study has rendered less sharp and clear the boundaries that separate the Christian faith from the world faiths, and has led some to doubt whether it is possible any longer to speak of Christianity as the supreme and unique revelation of God. Christian apologetes now sometimes feel themselves called on to defend the originality and finality of the faith they represent.

It is well that it should be so; for the dynamic of our creed lies less in the beliefs we inherit from our fathers than in those we win for ourselves. Those who would have a living faith should welcome the challenge that the comparative study of religions has brought us, to ask ourselves just what we mean when we say that Jesus is not *a* son of God but *the* Son of God.

His uniqueness does not lie altogether in his teaching. A careful comparison of the words of Jesus with the Old Testament and with the Jewish literature of the period subsequent to the Old Testament shows the often unsuspected extent to which the piety of Jesus was nurtured on the Jewish Scriptures. We no longer resent the discovery of literary parallels even to some of the most memorable of the sayings of Jesus; they are but additional proofs that God has never left himself without a witness. The meaning of Jesus for our age and for all ages lies rather in what he was and in what he is.

It is easy for us to belittle ancient ecclesiastical controversies on the nature of "the person of Christ," and the conclusions to which they led. If the categories of a former age do not adequately express the religious experiences of our day, it is for us not to ignore the question, but to find formulæ that more adequately interpret what Jesus is to us. From the first, Christians seem to have felt instinctively, as they brooded over the teaching, the doings, the sufferings of Jesus, that the fundamental question was: Who was it that thus taught and did and suffered? What was his authority? That question is still fundamental. We may, while ignoring it, preach what is in some sense a Christian gospel; but, sooner or later, it forces itself on us.

There is a certain irony in the fact that, at the very time when Christian scholars are writing books in defence of the spiritual authority of Jesus, when many Christians feel it incumbent on them as educated men to regard Christianity simply as one faith among others, educated non-Christians are more or less frankly confessing that the Christian religion is the ideal to which other religions point. The Hindu apologetic of our day largely consists in maintaining that the parts of Hinduism, which from the Christian point of view are objectionable, are not essential to that religion, that on a broad view there is no fundamental difference between Hinduism and Christianity. In many parts of the world to-day, the life and teaching of Jesus are moulding the thought and the conduct of men far beyond the confines of the Christian church.

We shall have something to say later on regarding the spell that Jesus has cast over many of the finest minds in the East. The following statement at least will hardly be questioned: If Jesus Christ is not God's final revelation to men, we cannot even begin to con-

ceive what the lines of a loftier revelation would be. It is indeed an instructive exercise to take the criticisms that have been levelled at Jesus (such as temper and uncharitableness in dealing with the Pharisees), and ask ourselves in each case what new light is shed on Jesus' attitude to life by his words or actions that called forth the criticism. That the revolution effected by the gospel of Jesus has not been greater, is attributable to no limitation in the ideal he set before us, or in the dynamic he has given us to carry out that ideal.

### 3. Religion as a Function of the National Spirit.

There is again in certain quarters a feeling that a nation's religion is a function of the national spirit; that each nation works out the form of religion best adapted to its own needs, and that to invite a non-Christian people to adopt Christianity is in effect to encourage a more or less serious distortion of the national genius. This attitude is perhaps most frequently found among the classes whose attachment to Christianity is mainly an inherited tradition. A strong incentive to accept this point of view is the fear that the social and industrial situation will, from our point of view, be changed for the worse as Christianity spreads among those of other faiths. A subtle factor in the situation is the half-acknowledged contempt that so many white people feel for all the interests of the colored. When they say, "Their own religion is good enough for *them*," there is a world of meaning in the "*them*." No one who knows the thought movements of to-day can be blind to the prevalence of the feeling that, in things religious, each nation should be left to work out its own salvation, and to the extent to which this sentiment cripples the church in its foreign enterprise.

Putting it in its simplest terms the assumption is that religious ideas which enter a country from the outside can never be for the good of its people. Expressed thus bluntly, the statement hardly needs serious consideration. Again and again in the history of the world a nation has enriched and uplifted its life by the acceptance of a religion which, in the first place, came to it as foreign. The African tribes which have adopted Mohammedanism have done so, in part at least, because they instinctively felt that they were being thereby raised to a higher level of thought and life. Even in those circles of the West where the anti-missionary feeling is strongest, there is no movement for a return to the forms of worship which prevailed in our country before the importation of a foreign Christianity. Will any one suggest that the educated Japanese, who in such large numbers have become Christians, would be better Japanese as Buddhists, Shintoists, or atheists? In the case of the outcastes of India, only a degree of prejudice amounting to heartless cruelty would discourage them from embracing a faith, however foreign, which will restore to them some measure of the dignity and self-respect of manhood. Nor is this true only of the outcastes. India has progressed and will progress, only to the extent to which she abandons some of the most characteristic tenets of Hinduism, adopts the Christian view of human brotherhood, and responds to the Christian call to co-operate with God in working out the salvation of the country. It is a curious coincidence that on this subject the laissez-faire Westerner is at one with the Animists. They too are of the opinion that it is not a question of better or worse; each nation has its own customs and its own religion, and there is an end of the matter. Warneck tells us that the Pakpak tribe had a pleasant custom of strangling their parents

and eating them when they got old. When Battak evangelists remonstrated with them, in all good conscience they replied, just as any British or American trader might have replied: "Every people has its own customs and that is ours."

### 4. The Denationalizing Influence of Christianity.

Akin to the criticism just discussed is the accusation often brought against missionaries that they "denationalize" the "natives" among whom they work. One peculiarity of this charge is that it is often found in the mouth of missionaries themselves, either as against other missionaries, or as against their own converts who adopt foreign customs and manners. It is symptomatic of the age in which we live that the charge of denationalization is held to be one of peculiar gravity. The accusation of denationalization does not come very gracefully from people who take their fashions in religion from Palestine, in philosophy from Greece, in music from Germany, in art from Italy, in dress from Paris, in silks from India, in dressing-gowns and bric-à-brac from Japan, and who claim and exercise the right to adopt into the national life whatever in any sphere or in any country seems likely to be of service.

### 5. Outward Changes Due to Christianity.

Perhaps India is the country where the question is most acute. When we ask for details of denationalization, usually we are pointed to certain features in food, clothing, or domestic habits and manners where, it is claimed, the Indian Christians have abandoned national customs in favor of foreign. In particular, many educated Indian Christians have adopted a form of European costume, discarding the *dhoti*, or semi-kilt, the characteristic Indian men's dress; thereby, it is

said, unnecessarily estranging themselves from their countrymen.

The Indian Christian reply is twofold. The followers of each religion in India, they say, have adopted a characteristic dress. The Christian has the same right to do this as has the Hindu, the Mohammedan, or the Parsee. Further, the *dhoti* is not the characteristic Indian dress. It is not worn by the Mohammedans, who number one-fifth of the population, nor by the Parsees, who play so distinguished a part in the national life. Nor do Hindus of good social position always wear it. The educated Indian Christian can see no reason why he should be identified with the Hindu community and especially with its less influential sections.

In a country where European prestige has long been and still is high, the temptation to imitate European ways must always be great for any section of the people that is anxious for social recognition. In any case the question of the extent to which a change so great as that from Hinduism, or even Mohammedanism, to Christianity reverberates through the whole personality, and is to be allowed to produce unforeseen and, to some, unwelcome consequences in the expression of personality, is one on which the persons most affected must be permitted to have the final word.

### 6. The Real Transformation.

In fact, however, the departures from national custom commonly classed as examples of denationalization often refer to matters more or less external and relatively unimportant. When we look at the deeper implications of Christianity on the one side, and nationalism on the other, we realize that to resent the charge of denationalization implies that we either misunderstand

the genius of Christianity, or attach an unusually broad meaning to nationalism. An Indian, a Japanese, a Chinese, and still more an African, who has experienced anything that can be called Christian conversion, whether or no he continues to wear his former dress, to eat his former food, and to speak his former language, is a new creature with new standards and new ambitions, not only for himself but for his country.

One has heard an educated Indian Christian at a public meeting express the hope that the time would come when his countrymen would think of themselves not primarily as Hindus, Mohammedans, Christians, and Parsees, but simply as Indians. If what he meant was that difference of creed need not interfere with common citizenship, the aspiration was commendable. One has to grant, too, that in the West, in our own time, national feeling has been a far more potent influence than community of religion. Yet, from the first, Christians recognized a new loyalty, other and more binding than that to the state. In so far as nationalism involves an unreasoning support of the institutions and the policy of one's country, and an undervaluation of the virtues and the claims of other countries, Christians everywhere will be "denationalized" to the extent to which they understand the genius of their religion.

### 7. Christianity Renationalizes.

Not only will loyalty to Jesus transform traditional types of character; but the extent to which it will change social sentiments, customs, and institutions is limited only by the extent to which these already conform to Christian ideals. We know more of the life of the infant church at Corinth than of any other of the early churches. Within a few years of Paul's first visit, the Christians of Corinth were asked to adopt a

non-Greek method of conducting litigation, Christian slaves were demanding their freedom, Christian women were claiming a measure of liberty not permitted by Greek custom and the right in the church meetings to disregard Greek conventions in the matter of dress. To such an extent had their new faith "denationalized" them. But these illustrations suggest that what was going on was a process not of "denationalization" but of "renationalization." A Christianity which did not challenge national custom and sentiment at many points would not be the religion of the New Testament.

In modern times Christianity, with its inexorable insistence on monogamy, inevitably disintegrates all features in the social system that depend on polygamy. An Indian weaver sometimes claims that he needs two wives to assist him in his work. If he becomes a Christian, he must solve his industrial problem in some other way than by bigamy. The African employs his many wives in the cultivation of his bananas. The introduction of Christianity will involve many changes in the agricultural system, possibly very beneficial changes. As one African put it, "a plow can do as much work as ten wives." Wherever Christianity successfully encounters Mohammedanism, there ensue vital changes in the social system. Whether or no we accept the Christian view that these changes are "reforms," at least they involve some measure of "denationalization."

### 8. It Challenges Age-Long Abuses.

In India three of the most prominent features of the "national" life have been the caste system, the joint family system, and the subordination of women. All of these have been seriously challenged by the spread of Christian ideas; all of them will disappear as the Christian church increases her influence. The caste

system, which draws impassable barriers between men, based on the accident of birth, which justifies Pharisaic contempt on the one side and abject cringing on the other, claims divine sanction for the denial of the fundamental Christian teaching of the brotherhood of man. The joint family system is that by which the sons and the grandsons in their turn bring their wives under the paternal roof, and the women folks are subject to the senior married woman. The justification for the joint family is that in India girls become wives and mothers long before they are fit to assume the responsibilities of wifehood and motherhood. But a country in which the wife is not the mistress of the home is depriving itself in large measure of that contribution which women can make to the national life. Many thoughtful Hindus are as much opposed to the system as are Christians.

Closely akin to this feature of the national life is the position of strict subordination occupied by women in India; a subordination which is partly the cause and partly the effect of the fact that the education of girls has lagged so far behind that of boys. It is very possible to exaggerate both the extent and the significance of this subordination. In India it has been found compatible with happy home life, with a large measure of respect for women, and with the supremacy of women in all matters of religious observance. Yet no people can humiliate its women as India has done, in practice as well as in theory, without paying the penalty to the full. A country in which birth as a woman is regarded as the penalty of a misspent life in a previous incarnation, in which only by breach of national and religious custom and as a rare mark of special favor will a man allow his wife to sit at the same table as himself, is a country which is ripe for a sweeping Christian revolution.

The charge then of "denationalizing the natives" is one which it is as idle to deny as to bring forward. Unless Christianity has lost its ancient power, it will mould anew the life of every nation that it touches. Just as under its influence even now, the social, industrial, and political systems of the West are changing more or less rapidly, so it will effect profound transformations in every department of the life of Africa and the Orient.

**9. A True Assimilation to Christianity Requires Time.** Indeed, in view of the radical "renationalization" that a living Christianity will effect anywhere, it is perhaps not altogether a matter for regret that the evangelization of certain countries has not proceeded more rapidly than it has. In the parable of the leaven the process of assimilation, like the growth in the parable of the mustard seed, was gradual. Time is required for the difficult and delicate adjustments made necessary by the passage of a people from a non-Christian to a Christian life and institutions, the amount of time required depending partly on the stage and the kind of civilization already reached by the nation. It seems safe to say that the more gradual the growth of the thought of a people and of the forms in which that thought expresses itself, the more likely are its social institutions to be firmly founded and abiding.

Part of the trouble in India is that what is really a conglomerate of nations and communities, at almost incredibly different stages of development, is being forced in a few years through stages of "reform" in the political and other spheres which in the West represented the work of centuries. In India various factors have been at work besides the Christian church; but in various parts of the world to-day, even if we look only at the religious factor, the transformation

effected by Christianity is so far-reaching that time is required for the consolidation of results if these are to be permanent. We are very far from the stage where missionary zeal has to be deprecated or discouraged; but, looking back, we can see that, if expectations have at times been disappointed, there have been compensations. Our Lord, with the wisdom born of experience as a builder, warned us, in spiritual things, to look to the foundations.

## VI

## REASONS ADVANCED AGAINST ITS URGENCY

### 1. Religious Propaganda Sometimes Deemed Impertinent.

Many again feel that anything in the nature of religious propaganda violates what are called "the sacred rights of conscience." A man's religion, we are told, is a personal and private matter, with which for any outsider to interfere is an impertinence. Among non-Christians this feeling sometimes shows itself in their resentment at any attempt by foreigners to induce them, as they express it, to "change their religion"; among Christians, in the more or less openly expressed sentiment that those who interest themselves in the religion of others are busybodies in other men's matters.

This view of religion is at the opposite pole from that of the persecutor, who believes it is his sacred duty, not only to induce others, but to compel them, at whatever extremity of pain or peril, to accept his creed. Those who argue like this would usually not object to attempts at political conversion; the reason apparently being that politics is regarded as dealing with living issues, while a man's religion consists of a set of ineffective and generally inoffensive beliefs and practices.

### 2. Religion Expresses Life's Values.

Let us freely grant that the working creed of most of us is so much at variance with the creed we profess, that

the sceptically minded have a certain justification for their conception of religion as a harmless luxury. This detached way of looking at the matter may sometimes indicate a large-minded tolerance; it may also indicate a complete indifference to the facts of history. Our religion is, in one aspect of it, our sense of life's values, and it is this sense that governs our conduct in big things and in little. Given the Mohammedan view of women, we get polygamy and the purdah. The caste system of India would crumble far more rapidly than it is doing, were not the Hindu convinced that it is God who has drawn these impassable barriers between caste and caste. The "Cursed be Canaan" type of theology gave us negro slavery; just as "Adam first, then Eve," kept women in Christian countries in social and political subjection for many centuries.

The Crusades, the "killing times," the slaughter of African twins, the atrocities perpetrated by the poison ordeal, all were inspired by motives that were strictly religious. The merchants who grow rich by exporting rum to Africa may not always pose as religious men; yet their choice of their life's work is determined by their conviction of the supreme value of money on the one hand, of the negligible value of African life on the other. Much recent history, again, is an attempt to translate into practice the Christian conception of personality; witness the new status of women and the new attitude to the poor, the aged, and the social outcast; the enlarged conception of social responsibility and the new orientation of political power. Even those Christians who have no desire to see Christendom enlarge its borders are no more anxious than the rest of us to see Mohammedanism spreading in Europe or in Asia. A Christianized Orient might not be more subservient to the West than an Orient Buddhist,

Hindu, or Confucian; it might well prove to be even more "troublesome"; yet the introduction of a vital Christianity into the East will release it from age-old shackles of many kinds and let mankind see for the first time of what it is capable.

### 3. The Need for Courtesy in Mission Work.

There are, however, valuable elements in this feeling, however mistaken on the whole, of the unseemliness of conducting a Christian propaganda among men of alien faiths. For one thing, we are increasingly sensitive to the departure from Christian standards involved in all that savors of "patronage" of the colored races. The missionary of earlier days may have felt himself tempted, not so much by his own vanity as by the circumstances amid which, and the attitude of the people for whom, he worked, to regard himself as a teacher, "sent down," as one Indian expressed it, for the benefit of "the natives." Perhaps most missionaries now would take a humbler estimate of their functions, and recognize that they are privileged to learn as well as to teach.

In particular it is more and more recognized that any element of compulsion in connection with missionary effort is unseemly; that, for example, to ask non-Christian boys to join in religious exercises in which they cannot take part conscientiously, or to make a Bible lesson compulsory where there is no alternative to the mission school or college, may easily lead to a breach of Christian courtesy.

### 4. It Is Handicapped by the Failures of Western Christianity.

Again, we are painfully conscious of all that Christianity has failed to achieve in the West. Britain's

shameful drink bill and drink traffic, the slums of Europe and America, the white slave trade, and the World War are heavy shackles on the feet of them who profess to bring good tidings from Christian to non-Christian countries. In our eagerness to make bold claims for Christianity we have been guilty of a good deal of loose thinking and careless speech, which are beginning to react on ourselves. We have spoken of the "Christian" West, ignoring the large sections of its population who could, without much injustice to them or even without much resentment from them, be definitely classed as pagan.

Even among those classes which have more or less deliberately adopted Christian ideals, there is still a good deal of vagueness as to the bearings of these ideals on their practical life. It is of the very essence of statecraft that a state in its moral demands can never go far beyond the ethical attainments or standards of the general body of the citizens. We have been inclined also to forget that, while there is such a thing as the Christianizing of the conscience of the community, ultimately Christianity is a way of life for the individual which cannot be thrust on any one from the outside, but can be followed only by those who feel the attraction of it. Along with our sowers of wheat we have our sowers of tares, as industrious as ever they were and perhaps not much less successful. Altogether, we have learned that our claims for the saving power of the gospel as exhibited in the history of Christian countries, will be effective in proportion as they are made with wise caution and discrimination.

Again, we recognize that there is often a certain unfairness in comparing the African or the Oriental of to-day with the Briton or American of to-day. If we hesitate to hold up the public or private life of Western

communities as a sample of the power of the Christian religion to raise men and women to a new scale of moral endeavor and achievement, in many cases we would be still more reluctant to draw our illustrations from the Western life of two or three centuries ago. In the history of nations two or three centuries form a very short period. There are many chapters of which we are all ashamed in the history even of the church.

**5. The Supreme Test Is the Character of the Converts.**

Yet the test of the validity of the claims made for the Christian gospel is, and always must be, its life-giving and life-transforming power. There is a certain justice in comparing the ideals of different religions; but we are on firmer ground when we compare their fruitage in the lives of their most convinced and enthusiastic exponents.

One of the most striking tributes to Christianity is the way in which men of all religions and of no religion expect a higher standard in Christian ethics from those who profess to be followers of Jesus than from those who do not. It is on all hands assumed that to be a Christian, in more than name, is to be a person with a definite and easily recognizable type of character; that the true Christian is more just and honorable, more kind and merciful, more truthful and industrious, and, above all, purer in his sexual relations by the fact that he is a Christian. Flagrant moral transgressions, which when men of other faiths are guilty of them would hardly be related at all to their religious professions, are, in the case of Christians, felt by all, Christian and non-Christian alike, to be a reproach to the church of Christ.

**6. Some Criticisms of Converts Are Unfounded.**

All the more deadly are the frequent reckless assertions that, in non-Christian countries, the converts are morally less satisfactory and reliable than the non-Christians. These charges are all the more difficult to deal with, in that they are frequently vague hearsay statements emanating from marine engineers and others who have "visited foreign parts." We would all acknowledge the unfairness of taking the Broomielaw as typical of Scottish Christianity, of judging the Church of England by the Thames waterside characters, of blasting the reputation of the Dutch church on account of trying experiences on the streets of Rotterdam, or of taking a Genoese quay-porter or a Neapolitan ferryman as a typical product of Roman Catholicism. No intelligent person whose acquaintance with the New World was confined to occasional dealings with the harbor population of Montreal or New York would pose as an authority on North American Christianity, even if most of his American acquaintances enrol themselves on a census paper as Christians. Yet every one who has ever advocated the cause of missions knows that men, whose knowledge of Oriental Christianity is confined to an occasional visit to a seaport town, are widely regarded as witnesses of great weight on the value of missions.

Unfavorable criticism sometimes comes also from Westerners residing among colored peoples, whose first-hand acquaintance with the Christian community is confined to one or two domestic servants, though occasionally white employers of labor on a larger scale profess to be dissatisfied with their native Christian workmen.

### 7. Careful Discrimination Essential.

In this respect missions have often suffered from the failure of their critics to note one or two important factors in the case : to distinguish, for example, between Protestants and Roman Catholics, or between those who have adopted the Christian faith as the result of conscientious conviction and those who call themselves Christians to curry favor with the foreigner. There is further failure to discriminate between converts, who may reasonably be expected to show some genuine change of life, and hereditary Christians who may have long since lost any vital connection with the church. In the mission fields, every man who bears the Christian name, however little he may be responsible for bearing it, is expected to exhibit the Christian virtues.

### 8. White Employers and Colored Workmen.

It is unnecessary to suggest that white employers of colored labor are, as a class, prejudiced against Christianity. The fact remains that there is a great temptation for employers to prefer, at least for the less skilled work, unsophisticated natives who have never been "spoiled" by education, who have never been taught Christian ideas of personality, or manhood, or human rights; and whose wants are restricted to the elementary human needs. Christian missionaries may sometimes have made mistakes in giving their converts, and the children of their converts, an education that fitted them for a life very different from that they were actually going to lead. Much anxious thought has been given and is being given to the question of a Christian education that varies with the needs of different spheres.

White employers of colored labor, as Schweitzer has reminded us, often deserve more consideration than

they receive. They are often responsible to some distant company or intangible body of shareholders, whose one aim is the delivery of as great a quantity of goods as possible. The white employer often has a high sense of duty and begins with the desire to be at least fair to his colored labor. Yet the colored labor on which he must depend is often expensive and unreliable, largely because the workmen have never learned habits of punctuality and persistent work or developed a sense of responsibility. Carelessness, dishonesty, or a prolonged unauthorized holiday that, to the workman, seems at the worst of the nature of an escapade, may bring the employer into quite unmerited disgrace and cause serious loss to those who are financing the operations. Repeated experiences of this kind are apt to harden the most tender heart and engender a cynical disbelief in the worth of the colored man.

This is one side of the picture; but there is another and darker side illustrated in a story which Doctor Dennis tells. Though the story is over a hundred years old, it still has its moral for us. In 1823 a law was passed by the British legislature that was regarded as securing an important reform in the treatment of the slaves in Demerara. The great boon secured to the slaves by this law was that they should not be worked more than nine hours a day, and that women should not be flogged. When the news reached Demerara, it "was received with great indignation by the planters" and the governor refused to proclaim it. "Distorted rumors of the withholding of some good news so excited the negroes that an insurrection followed, which was put down with frightful cruelties. The Reverend John Smith was falsely accused of aiding and abetting in rebellion, was tried by court martial, and publicly sentenced to be hanged. The sentence was not carried

out, but Mr. Smith was confined in a loathsome malarious prison-cell, where he fell a victim to a swift and fatal illness."

### 9. Christian Labor not Necessarily the Least Troublesome.

While the Christian workman should be surpassed by none in faithfulness, one would hesitate to claim that Christian labor either is, or should be, cheaper or less "troublesome" than non-Christian. Much that to the unsympathetic employer looks like "cheek" or insubordination is really imperfectly digested theology. Moreover, by creating a new desire for cleanliness, decency, sanitation, and education, Christianity does tend to make living somewhat more expensive for Christian workmen, and therefore to make them dissatisfied with wages that might be sufficient for people whose better instincts have never been aroused. The claim has been made for Chinese laborers that their work is cheaper, more satisfactory, and less harassing to the employer than that of any other nation. One would rather see Christian workmen distinguished for intelligence, integrity, and reliability than for cheapness and unmanly docility. As the aims of employers are not always compatible with the claims of Christian workmen, we must be prepared for a certain amount of continued criticism from this side.

### 10. Other Considerations.

One of the surprises and disappointments of missionary effort is the frequency with which depreciatory estimates of the character of native Christians is made in a tone of satisfaction, if not of glee; even when the critic is one who himself sits down at our Lord's communion table. The frequent absence of any sense of

brotherliness, of any feeling, where there has been a real moral lapse, that a brother's shame is our shame, helps one to realize how far we are from Jesus' conception of the brotherhood and sisterhood of those who do God's will.

The "native" Christians who are most fiercely criticised are often drawn from classes which for millennia have been downtrodden and kept in ignorance. It is far harder for them than for us to reach even conventional standards of Christian morality. If they find themselves in circumstances where they are denied the stimulus of daily Christian fellowship, whether with white people or colored, denied perhaps even the opportunity of the inspiration of the church service on Sunday, we can hardly wonder if they sometimes give a handle for unfriendly criticism.

### 11. The Reality of Changed Lives.

While criticism of missions and their products is common among irresponsible onlookers and young officials, an impressive array of testimonies might be gathered, coming from men of experience, especially those holding responsible positions which have compelled them to give careful study to the matter. Probably there is no extensive mission field which could not make its contribution to such a collection. When the Honorable James Bryce was British Ambassador at Washington, he pleaded with the Christian churches, in place of the beliefs and traditions of the backward races, which we were destroying and which formed the basis of the only morality they knew, to send to them "the supremest gift the world has ever received" and in which we believe the safety and future hope of the world lie—a knowledge of the life and the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ. Stanley, the African traveller,

said he went to Africa as prejudiced against missions as the worst infidel in London, but he was converted by Livingstone, though the latter had made no effort to convert him. After two and a half years of colonial administration, the Right Honorable Winston Churchill paid a lofty tribute to the work of Christian missions, especially in Uganda, where, "in the heart of Africa, plunged hundreds of miles away in the centre of that mysterious continent, you find a race of negroes docile, peaceful, law-abiding, and polite, of whom a very great number have embraced the Christian faith and have abandoned their native customs, deeply though they may have been ingrained in their nature, and where more than a hundred thousand persons have been taught to read and write without the state contributing a penny, solely by the influence of missions." Commander Charles O'Neil of the U. S. Navy paid a similar tribute to the work of the missionaries in Turkey; and the Honorable Charles Denby, formerly U. S. minister to China, spoke in the most cordial terms of the value of mission work in China. To do justice to this aspect of the subject would require a volume.

There is no need in this place to retell the oft-told tale of the way in which the gospel goes on its world-conquering mission, revealing and calling into activity unsuspected latent capacities of mind and spirit, breathing life into dry bones, and bringing to birth literally a new creation. We are here concerned with some considerations constantly forgotten by those who, on the basis of professed experience, maintain that, except among white men, the quality of life is lowered and not raised by conversion to Christianity. The white man's fear of the result of the impact of Christianity on the colored races is at least not a new phenomenon. It

was at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Doctor Robinson tells us, that Mr. Elias Neau, a Frenchman, was appointed to teach the negroes and Indians and children of New York. He was handicapped in his work by the fact that "the generality" of the "inhabitants" were "strangely prejudiced with a horrid notion, thinking the Christian knowledge" would be "a means to make their slaves more cunning and apter to wickedness." Half a century later in this same field, the clergyman in charge of the work reported that "not one single black" who had been "admitted by him to the Holy Communion" had "turned out bad, or been in any shape a disgrace to our holy profession," and that the masters of the negroes had become "more desirous than they used to be of having them instructed." It is a very mild tribute; but it is only one in the long succession of testimonies from all parts of the world that bear witness that the Christian gospel is to-day, as it was from the beginning, not primarily the maker of creeds but the maker of men.

One could wish that those who are so critical about the ethical attainments of the members of the mission churches could know of the price these willingly pay for loyalty to their faith, in the endurance of pain and shame and loss; could know how manfully they meet the supreme test: he that loseth his life shall save it. The story of the fidelity of the Christians of China during the Boxer rising has taken its place among the imperishable memorials of the Christian church. Dr. Arthur J. Brown has gathered for us some records. "Two graduates of Teng-chou College remained for weary weeks in a filthy dungeon when they might have purchased freedom at any moment by renouncing Christianity. Pastor Meng, of Paoting-fu, a direct descendant of Mencius, was one hundred and twenty

miles from home when the outbreak occurred. He was safe where he was, but he hurried back to die with his flock." "A poor cook was seized and beaten, his ears were cut off, his mouth and cheeks gashed with a sword and other unspeakable mutilations inflicted. Yet he stood as firmly as any martyr of the early church." A Chinese preacher, mangled and half-dead after a hundred blows on the bare back, chose to suffer another hundred blows rather than deny his Master; though unconsciousness came and he was left for dead before his torturers could finish their work.[1]

All the world knows how Arthur Jackson gave up his life for the people of Manchuria during the epidemic of pneumonic plague in 1911. Very few know of the courageous and patient service of Indian Christians in fighting the bubonic plague that has ravaged India so terribly during the last quarter of a century. In one of the earlier epidemics Doctor Agnes Henderson was asked to take charge of a municipal plague camp at Nagpur, in the Central Provinces of India. She called for volunteers from among the hospital staff. One of the first to volunteer was Sitabai, a gentle Indian girl who had been a member of the church for only a few weeks. She did her duty faithfully, knowing well the risk she ran, even when some cases of pneumonic plague were brought in, until at last she offered herself a living sacrifice for her people. Is there any mission station anywhere, with any length of history behind it, that could not tell similar stories of humble converts who loved not their lives unto the death?

### 12. Diminishing Emphasis on the Future Life.

Yet another factor in the situation makes the missionary's task seem to many at least less urgent than it

[1] *New Forces in Old China*, p. 275.

seemed in previous generations. It was perhaps never quite true to say that the evangelizing efforts of the church of yesterday had in view primarily life after death. It is however no exaggeration to say that the fate of the individual soul in a future life was the most powerful stimulus to missionary effort. Christian literature, Christian preaching, and the public and private activities of Christian people, all suggest that the thought of the church of to-day is largely confined to the life that now is; though this important change in the centre of gravity of Christian interest is only partially realized and acknowledged. We shall have something to say later on changing conceptions of salvation. In the meantime we only note that, for good or evil, the old watchwords of missionary campaigns have largely lost their power. We believe that we conceive the claims of the non-Christian world on the church even more truly than our fathers did; but perhaps we have hardly learned to express the note of urgency as convincingly for our generation as they did for theirs.

# VII

## THE MISSIONARY AIM

### 1. The Conversion of Individuals.

As already indicated, in the last generation or two a somewhat radical change has taken place in the aim of the church, at least in her proximate aim, in her approach to the world. The present outburst of activity in the foreign enterprise of the churches has coincided, roughly at least, with their changed attitude to social problems. We might describe, with a somewhat deceptive simplicity, the recent evolution of Christian thought and purpose by saying that, whereas formerly the goal of evangelistic work was the salvation of the individual soul, we think of the man rather than of the soul, and of the group rather than of the individual.

It was inevitable that the church's conception of her mission to the larger world should undergo a corresponding development. In reality all that has happened is a change of emphasis. Our fathers, and their fathers before them, knew quite well, and acted on the knowledge, that the social surroundings, the moral and spiritual environment of the Indian or the Chinese, were among the most powerful factors influencing his attitude to the Christian gospel; that in so far as these could be Christianized, would the Christian approach to the Oriental be simplified. This in part explains the enthusiasm for Christian education of the earlier Christian missionaries, especially to India.

On the other hand, however much we may speak of the social implications of Christianity, we know it is as

true abroad as it is at home that a people can never, in any Christian sense of the word, be "saved" in the mass, that in the long run the level of the spiritual life of a nation depends on the voluntary choice of individuals. Only those who without much reflection follow current tendencies would undervalue the importance among missionary aims of the endeavor to win men and women, one by one, to Christian belief and practice.

2. Philanthropic Work.

In the prosecution of this aim, the missionary whose main work is the preaching of the gospel is now a somewhat rare exception. It is indeed difficult for the non-expert, however interested, to keep pace with the vast and varied ramifications of the modern missionary enterprise. These are of such a nature that even those who have least sympathy with their ultimate aim, unless they are devoid of ordinary human feeling, have nothing but admiration for the methods by which it is sought to reach that aim.

The church's foreign ambassadors to-day conduct dispensaries and hospitals, general and specialized, including, for example, institutions for the blind and leper asylums. Some of them have a reputation that extends far beyond the limits of the country in which they work, especially in such departments as general or ophthalmic surgery. They have been pioneers in various branches of education; for example, in the education of the girls and women and of the low castes of India. To an astonishing degree the education of the Orient and of Africa is either directly in the hands of Christian missionaries or is indirectly inspired by them; and that in all its stages from the kindergarten to university post-graduate work. Under education we include not

only general culture but also special training in theology, in medicine and nursing, in pedagogy, in agriculture, and in industries.

Certain missionary industrial schools, notably in Africa, are recognized over wide areas as great civilizing institutions. In those devastating famines in India and China, that are as great a problem to faith as to statecraft, the Christian church can always be relied on to play a worthy part. During the ravages of epidemic disease—and large tracts of the Orient are practically never free from epidemics that cause a mortality such as in the Western world is only a dim memory—the Christian doctor is always there. Missionaries conduct orphanages, engage in rescue work, superintend homes for the fallen, for the poor, for the intellectually subnormal, for the education of the blind. By such institutions as co-operative credit banks they try to deliver poor peasant farmers from the double tyranny of the money-lender and of their own improvidence. Whereever there are wrongs to be righted, slaves to be set free, the oppressed to be delivered, the down-trodden to be taught to rise, the banner of the cross is in the forefront of the work of rescue. It may indeed be fairly claimed that among the most notable of the triumphs of the missionary enterprise of the church is the association in the non-Christian mind of the name of Jesus with the alleviation of pain, the healing of sickness, the struggle against degradation and ignorance and tyranny in all their forms.

One of the most important items of missionary activity is literary work in all its various branches of writing, translating, editing, printing, and publishing. Books, magazines, and pamphlets pour from mission presses by the hundred thousand, and multiply incalculably the influence of their writers. In fact, a lead-

ing missionary administrator, the Rev. William Paton, of the Mission Council of India, Burma, and Ceylon, has recently stated, as his matured conviction, that Christian literature is equal in value to-day, on the mission field, to the preaching of the gospel. Many missionaries have seats on municipal, district, and provincial councils, on school boards and university senates. Others are found in charge of student hostels, of farm settlements and model villages. Some lead or help in the administration of child welfare schemes; others are experts on problems of rural life, which in the East are even more difficult of solution than in the West; yet others are pioneers in the industrial regeneration of the countries in which they work, while some are business men and women, responsible for the financial and the material side of the work of the society they represent.

### 3. Illustrations of Missionary Activity.

#### (*a*) *Bible Translation.*

Let us take two illustrations from the less well-known fields of missionary activity. First, it will be worth while to look at the work which missionaries have done in the translation of the Scriptures. No missionary can make very much headway until he is able to give the people at least the Gospels in their own vernacular. The Bible Society, whose special work it is to care for the translation and the distribution of the Scriptures, is not merely an invaluable adjunct of the missionary societies, but is itself a missionary society of the first importance. The Bible is the most ubiquitous, unwearied, and effective of all missionaries, going where no missionary can go and staying behind where the missionary has once been and has left. The story of the sale of the Scriptures, and the experiences of the

colporteurs and others whose work it is to sell them, often to tribes whose very names are unknown to most of us, sometimes in romantic, sometimes in very dangerous surroundings—a story told with great skill and power in the annual reports of the British and Foreign Bible Society—is one of the most fascinating and convincing of all stories of missionary triumph.

We are, however, at present concerned rather with the actual work of translation. In the case of the more primitive peoples, sometimes the missionary has to begin by inventing or adapting an alphabet. When the difficulty of the script has been overcome, all sorts of other problems arise. Sometimes the things, the names of which have to be translated, are unknown among the people for whom the translation is being made. In view of the simplicity of a Zulu lady's toilet, it will readily be understood that the translators into Zulu are nonplussed by Isaiah's description of the fine array of the daughters of Zion (Isaiah 3 : 16 ff.). The Nupe language (Upper Niger) has no word for "bachelor," and so in the translation a word was used which means literally "red-eye," and is applied to a man who is sad because he would like to marry and have some one to cook his food, but has not enough money to buy a wife. Sometimes, again, it is an idea that is wanting in the native mind. The first missionaries to the Eskimos of Labrador, finding themselves forced to coin a word for "forgiveness," hit on the "splendid picture word" "Issumagijaujungnainermik," which conveys the idea "not being able to think about it any more."

Even where both ideas and words exist, it may be very difficult for the missionary to find the word. The chief translator into the Ila language (spoken in the district north of the Victoria Falls, on the Zambesi) learned the word for "trust" by hearing a native boy

express doubts of the *trust*worthiness of a rickety ladder which the missionary had climbed. The Reverend A. A. Lind, who was the first to attempt to reduce to writing the language of the Mardias, an aboriginal tribe in the south of the Central Provinces of India, describes the devices to which he had to resort to obtain from the Mardias the names of different objects. "I grunted like a pig, quacked like a duck, neighed like a horse, howled like a jackal, and so forth; I also had to exercise all my artistic abilities in drawing various kinds of animals, birds, and insects." Gradually he made progress with the translation of Mark's Gospel. Primitive psychology, again, makes difficulties for the translator. Thus, according to Binandere, in the language of a Papuan tribe the seat of emotion is not the heart, but the throat; so that "bad throat" means "sorrow," a "throaty" man is a wise man, and to "take the throat" means to love. In the same language "thou gavest me no kiss" had to be translated "thou didst not smell my nose."

Even where the translation is correct from a purely dictionary point of view, the meaning conveyed to the native mind may be wide as the poles from that which the translator intended. The inexperienced translator may use a word for God that indicates not "the Source of all things" but one of the innumerable gods of the "polytheist," and for "sin" a word that suggests primarily a breach of some ritual regulation. In certain Indian languages "repentance" has sometimes been translated by a word which really indicates the penance by which an offender against caste law can be restored to caste membership. The Salvation Army in India has adopted as its Indian name "Muktifauj" (Army of Deliverance), but the deliverance which the Hindu has in mind when he uses this word is very different

from the Christian salvation that Commissioner Booth-Tucker used it to indicate.

As the missionary gains insight into the customs and the language idioms of those among whom he works, misunderstandings are gradually recognized and corrected. Thus in Isaiah 33 : 15, 16 it is said of the man "who shall dwell on high" that "he shaketh his hands from holding of bribes." The first translators of the Old Testament into Hindi rendered this phrase, "When a bribe is slipped into his hand, he dashes it down"; but the pundits pointed out that the only meaning this phrase would convey to the Indian mind would be that the recipient was dissatisfied with the amount of the bribe offered. Similarly in Genesis 46 : 4 the words "Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes" was at first translated by a phrase which, according to the pundits, represented Joseph as giving his father two black eyes.

The question involved in the nature of a translation of the Bible is a far bigger one than that of simple accuracy. The character of the language employed colors, in the mind of the reader, his whole conception of the religion whose sacred book the Bible is. We know now, what until recently we did not know, that the writers of the New Testament, guided surely in this by the Spirit of God, departed from the common custom of Greek writers and wrote in the language of the people, the language of the market-place and the home. The King James translation of the Bible is a miracle in its combination of simplicity and dignity, a combination which makes any approximation to it the despair of "modern" translators. It was so, partly because it caught so faithfully the Hebrew spirit which dominates the Bible, partly because of the period in the history of English literature at which the translation was made,

but largely because of the deliberate choice of the translators.

As Christianity is the religion of the common man, its sacred book must be written in a language which he can understand; the King James version is the Bible "in the vulgar tongue." William Caxton, the first man to set up a printing-press in England, tells us that, in his translation, some desired him to use the most curious terms he could find, while others desired him to use old and homely terms. We still have those two schools. When a so-called vernacular translation is full of terms far beyond the capacity of the average person to understand, it is in fact an intimation that the religion is not meant for him. On the other hand, the use of undignified and too colloquial expressions suggests that the religion is not meant for educated men. Harnack tells us that one great obstacle to the early spread of Christianity lay in the old Latin version of the Bible, which was written in vulgar Latin and was so literal as to be almost unintelligible. Current criticisms of our modern translations by educated "natives" are not always justified; but the fact that they are made is sufficient evidence of the importance of having Bible versions of which the educated Christian need not be ashamed. Yet even more important is it to have translations which will win the verdict given to Sir George Grierson's version in the Magahi dialect of Bihari (Northeast India). The villagers, as one of them read aloud from Mark's Gospel to an assembled group, "looked pleased and nodded to each other while hearing the dialect of their homes."

(*b*) *Co-operative Credit.*

Let us take one more illustration from a very different sphere of missionary activity. In most parts of the

world farmers have to borrow money; but the indebtedness of the Indian farmer is chronic and crushing. Multitudes of Indian peasants have been little more than bond-servants of the village money-lender. For this there have been various reasons, such as illiteracy and improvidence, the habit of turning savings into ornaments or burying them in the ground, the frequent occurrence of bad seasons, and the extraordinary expenditure incurred by Indians of all classes on the occasion of a funeral in the family or (in many castes) the marriage of a daughter. The government plan of advancing loans on easy terms for farming operations or for land improvements had not got to the root of the difficulty; since it did nothing to alter the character or the outlook of the farmer. Cheap credit meant only that the farmer got more deeply into debt.

Early in this century attention was directed to the plan of co-operative credit developed with such success in South Germany by Raiffeisen. The central idea was that all the farmers in a village should form a co-operative credit society and should borrow on the credit of the whole society. Since liability was unlimited, the whole village became a vigilance association to keep an eye on each villager, not only on his farming operations but on his private life.

The condition of the Indian farmer, often deplorable enough when he belongs to the hereditary farmer caste, is infinitely worse when he is an outcast of the outcast, on the lowest rung of the long ladder of Indian social and religious precedence. Many of the Christians of Jalna (in the Nizam's Dominions) had come from the lowly Mang caste. Their inherited character was such as might be expected after being treated by the Hindus for millennia with a contempt and an insolence hardly conceivable to the Western mind. As Mangs they had

made their living by beating the drum in Hindu religious processions. The question whether as Christians they could continue to earn their living in this way, agitated for a time the church to which they belonged. The arguments used on both sides strongly resembled the arguments used, when a Christian church was first started in Corinth, on the legitimacy of Christians eating food that had been offered to idols. At last the Jalna Christians solved the problem by voluntarily abandoning their hereditary occupation.

Still, they had to live somehow. Long before, an attempt had been made to turn the community into farmers. Little success resulted, and the difficulties seemed insurmountable, till co-operative credit came like an evangel which would put new heart into sorely tried men and turn them into a community of self-respecting citizens. In 1920 Tom Dobson, who, as manager of the Mission Printing Press in Poona, had already shown himself possessed of a singular combination of gifts, was appointed manager of the Jalna Co-operative Credit Bank. Among the most inspiring stories in recent missionary biography is the account of the gallant struggle he made with every resource of his great personality for the people whose cause he had made his own. He fought against the all but invincible odds of inherited "shiftlessness," distrust, and an extraordinary succession of bad seasons, until, in the fulness of his powers and at what seemed the dawning of a better day, he fell a victim to the knife of an assassin.[1]

### 4. Preparation for the Gospel.

Yet the missionary is never just a philanthropist; and many of those who heartily sympathize with most of

[1] *Tom Dobson*, by Nicol MacNicol (Hodder & Stoughton).

these items of his activities, view with indifference or even hostility the final aim toward which the missionary conceives all these lines of effort to lead. To borrow metaphors from the parable of the sower, the educational, medical, industrial, and general social work of the church is of the nature of plowing the hard soil, of digging up rock, of rooting out noxious weeds, in preparation for the coming of a new and richer life. To quote again the saying of Jesus that was somehow missed by those who collected his sayings for our Gospels, "it is more blessed to give than to receive." That is as true of the helped as it is of the helper. Philanthropy is superficial except in so far as it is creating philanthropists. The Samaritan's work is unfinished until the wounded traveller has caught something of the spirit of the Samaritan. Is there any motive other than the religious through which the manifold activities of the church can become something other than salvage work, which can make of them redemptive and creative agencies?

### 5. Establishing a Christian Church.

While, then, much of the social and educational work of the church beyond her own borders is worth doing for its own sake, it is not in fact done for its own sake. One primary aim is to lead men and women to the Christian "way." But from the beginning one of the distinguishing marks of the follower of Jesus was that he was a member of a fellowship. The Christians were "the brothers." The Christian church was from the beginning a community of men and women who had one Lord, one faith, one baptism; giving thanks to the one God for the same salvation, sustaining their souls on the same bread of life, filled with one hope for the future, and using their spiritual gifts for the common

weal. As it was in the beginning, so it is to-day. Until in each country in which the Gospel is lived and preached, men and women of "the way" are formed into a "body" in which the life of each is the life of all and the service of each is the service of all, the missionary is only at the beginning of his task. On the other hand, when in any country there is a Christian church strong enough, under divine guidance, to nurture its own life, to shape its own ideals, and carry out its own programme of expansion, then, while the missionary's task may not be finished, at least the church is no longer a mission church. There is indeed a good deal to be said for the view that, in many parts of the non-Christian world, the time has come for the representatives of the Western churches to concentrate on the education of the Christian community, on the preservation and elevation of Christian ideals, and on such a training for the young as will make possible homes in which the Christian life may be lived with a beauty and power that will lead others to seek the source whence they come.

### 6. Time Required for the Development of the Christian Spirit.

In this work we learn by experience, what we might have learned from a study of our Bibles, that spiritual life is a growth. We are now familiar with the view that in the Bible we have the story of the evolution of a religion, a gradual progress from primitive views of God and man and their mutual relations to more spiritual views, until we reach the philosophic Christianity of the later books of the New Testament. Yet, in spite of the parables of the leaven and the mustard seed and the sower, we sometimes expect backward peoples of our own day to go through in a generation an intellec-

tual, ethical, and religious development which among the Jews occupied centuries. A leading authority on economics estimates that several generations are required to train a nation to the use of machinery. While the rapidity with which the Christian spirit moulds anew the lives of those who submit to its working has always been one of the miracles of Christianity, yet the Christian handling of life is an art at least as delicate and as difficult to acquire in its completeness as the manipulation of machinery. Patience is a favorite virtue of the New Testament teachers; and the church has need of patience in waiting for the slowly ripening fruits of much of her work among non-Christian peoples.

It is almost amusing to note how some commentators on the New Testament assume that a young church is an enthusiastic church, with an unusually high level of moral conduct. In discussions, for example, of the date of the Epistle of James, the apparent lukewarmness of the recipients of the letter, and the serious moral lapses supposed to be implied by the author, have been taken as evidence that the church had been in existence long enough to lose the fervor of its first love. But neither the New Testament records nor modern missionary experience confirms the view that a church is ethically most efficient and spiritually most sensitive in the first years of its existence.

# VIII

## THE MISSIONARY MOTIVE

In the previous chapter we have tried to answer the question what it is that the church is trying to do when she carries the Christian message to non-Christian countries. It would, however, be a mistake to suppose that this aim is the conscious motive of all who take part in the work. The missionary cause is sometimes argued on grounds that are anything but spiritual, and even among those who have the loftiest conception of what evangelization means, different aspects of the work appeal with different degrees of force.

### 1. The Commercial Motive.

It is still necessary in certain quarters to protest against the view that the missionary, however unintentionally and even unconsciously, is a tout for the business and the commercial interests of the country to which he belongs. Dennis, in his *Modern Call of Missions*, quotes a saying of Charles Denby, who was for many years American ambassador in China: "If the missionary promotes civilization, he also promotes trade." He also refers to a pronouncement of Henry Venn, a distinguished secretary of the Church Missionary Society more than half a century ago: "When a missionary had been abroad twenty years, he was worth £10,000 a year to British commerce." Such appeals to cupidity are perhaps not now made quite so blatantly by responsible authorities, but there are still men who believe that the most effective argument for missions is the return they bring in dollars and dimes.

It cannot be repeated too often or too emphatically that if the missionary has any commercial value to the country of his birth, the less said about it the better. The Oriental is already sufficiently inclined to be sceptical of the motives of those who come to do him good. Whatever other charges may be brought against the missionary, few will accuse him of being inspired by self-interest in the choice of his life's work. We cannot deprecate too strongly every attempt to make the support of the missionary dependent on the hope of pecuniary gain.

**2. Political Aggrandizement as a Missionary Motive.**

Hardly more dignified is the appeal to the love of political aggrandizement. It would not be difficult to show that Christian missions have paved the way for large extensions of empire, especially of the British Empire; that they have greatly assisted in the work of consolidating that empire and keeping it intact. In particular, educational and medical missions have done more perhaps than any other single factor to soften the acerbities of racial and color difficulties, and to bridge the gulf of political inequality. It has been remarked that it is easier for teachers, even when they are government officials, to transcend political and racial differences, than for almost any other class of government officers. Schools and colleges ought to be, and often are, among the most democratic of all institutions; and the common pursuit of common aims in the things of the mind and the spirit helps teachers and pupils to forget the things that separate them. Still more is this true where the dignities and responsibilities of government service are absent.

Perhaps the imperial possibilities of missions have never been better illustrated than in the story told in

*Laws of Livingstonia* of the annexation of Ngoniland. It was won for the British Empire, neither by the soldier, nor by the administrator, nor by the explorer, but by the missionary. Sir Alfred Sharpe, Commissioner of Nyasaland, put absolute confidence in the judgment of Doctor Laws about the precise moment when the country was ripe for annexation. On receipt of a letter from Doctor Laws, the commissioner "did a thing surely unparalleled in the story of British colonization. He went up into the wilds of Ngoniland to annex the country, unattended by the military, and taking only his wife with him." On September 2, 1904, the day fixed for the great palaver with the native chiefs, "the Ngoni gathered in their thousands, chiefs and indunas and fighting men, with spears and shields, the proudest and most warlike people in Central Africa, and the commissioner walked into their midst to take away their independence, with all the implication which that involved—the surrender of their old care-free life, the submission to outside authority, the imposition of taxation—and he was alone. The few soldiers he had brought with him as a matter of form mingled, unarmed, with the spectators."

A mission teacher acted as an interpreter; and after a long palaver, with many explanations asked and patiently and tactfully given, without the firing of a single shot and with the good will of the "wild Ngoni," by the setting of the sun Ngoniland had been added to the British Empire. The commissioner gratefully acknowledged his great indebtedness to Doctor Laws and the other missionaries.[1]

While all this is true, it should form no element in the missionary appeal, conscious or unconscious. The Christian who understands what spirit he is of, could

[1] P. 314 ff.

no more urge men to support the foreign enterprise of the church on the ground that it extends their country's influence and power than he could urge his friends to take office in the church as a piece of good business advertising. Paul was very "correct" in his relations to the government of the day, but the first Christians, like their Master, were sometimes branded as revolutionaries; and imagination fails to picture Paul preaching Christ and him crucified with one eye on the progress of the flag. He moved in another region of thought.

**3. True Christianity Upholds National Loyalty.**

Christians everywhere will protest against immoral customs, and will refuse to obey government laws where these bring them into direct conflict with essential principles of their religion. Thus, Christians of the third century preferred to suffer death rather than obey the imperial command to pay divine honors to Roman emperors. Yet loyalty to the government of one's country was taught by Jesus himself, by Paul, and by the author of I Peter. Part of the motive of Acts was to prove to Theophilus, who may have been connected in some way with the Roman government, that the Christians were law-abiding subjects, and that the Roman officials, far from regarding them as rebels, had repeatedly intervened to protect the Christian missionaries.

The same testimony could be given in our own day. It was one of the findings of the World Missionary Conference held in London (1910) that "wherever the ruling power is performing, even imperfectly, its primary duties of keeping peace and administering some kind of justice between man and man, it has the active support of Christian missions. From Japan, China, India, Africa, comes the claim that the Christian com-

munity, though often discouraged and sometimes persecuted, is the most law-abiding and loyal section of the community." The intervening years have served only to underline this testimony, so far as both missionaries and native Christians are concerned. This is partly because Christianity is a religion of peace; partly because the modern Christian shares the fear of the first Christians, that the new religion might be side-tracked on to some path of moral reform, that might lead to bloodshed and give an utterly distorted view of what Christianity stood for. The feeling was common to the Christians of that day as also of this that our citizenship is in heaven; and that, in comparison with the things over which politicians squabble, the interests of the Kingdom are of infinite importance. But the political loyalty of the native Christians is to be ascribed also to this, that they are very receptive pupils of those who teach them that, in so far as they are citizens of any earthly country, it is in the first place of the country in which they live.

### 4. Denominational Aggrandizement Unworthy as an Aim.

A subtler temptation is to yield to the desire for ecclesiastical aggrandizement, to regard it as the end and aim of the enterprise that a certain number of people who call themselves Hindus, Buddhists, or Moslems should more or less conscientiously call themselves Christians. There is a way of counting converts which irresistibly reminds us of the American Indian counting his scalps. This attitude is perhaps commoner among those who view the work from afar than among those actually engaged in it. In so far as the latter fall victims, the cause is often to be found in home Boards that insist on statistics, and in home friends

who finance the work and judge the success of a mission station by the same tests by which they would judge that of a department store. It is unnecessary to say that, to the missionary who has what the Epistle to the Hebrews calls the first elements of Christianity, this whole spirit is as revolting as it can be to any dispassionate critic.

**5. The Jews Were Effective Missionaries.**

If we ask what was the missionary motive in New Testament times, we have to acknowledge that the question hardly seems to have arisen. The ground had been in a measure prepared by the proselytizing zeal of enthusiastic Jews. We know from the Gospel records, as well as from outside historical sources, that our Lord's ministry covered part of a period when the Jews, perhaps in this untrue to the genius of their race and their religion, conducted a vigorous missionary propaganda, a propaganda which, so far as Palestinian Jews are concerned, seems to have largely collapsed with the fall of Jerusalem.

The repellent picture which we get of the Pharisees in the Gospels, in particular, our Lord's contemptuous reference to their missionary activities (Matthew 23 : 15), together with the unpleasant associations of the word "proselyte," makes it difficult for us to be quite fair to the missionary work of the Jews of the period. It is evident that in spite of the intolerance of the Jews, an intolerance in some respects entirely honorable, and even with the handicap of repellent religious customs such as circumcision, food tabus, and the consequent social exclusiveness, many of the finest spirits in the Roman Empire of the time were attracted by the Jewish creed and the Jewish worship, by its lofty spiritual conception of God, and the purity

of its moral ideals. Many who were unwilling to take on the yoke of the whole law by becoming proselytes nevertheless kept up a more or less close connection with the synagogue and were known as "God-fearers."

### 6. The Apostolic Church Believed That Religion Should Be Shared.

The Jews were thus familiar, as we have already seen, with the idea that religion was meant to be shared, before Jesus went on his preaching tours. Perhaps, however, we are not far from the truth when we say that the first Christians spread the gospel, not from any reasoned motive but because they could not help it. They certainly wanted to save men from an impending doom, however they may have conceived that doom; but still more they believed that God had spoken a final decisive word in Jesus, who was the Christ. They felt assured that the old order of things was passing away; that new powers were at work in the world, were at work in themselves; that if only men would repent and believe in Jesus, they would enter on the new, glad order of things and share in the new powers. They believed that "bliss was it in that dawn to be alive," and in the enthusiasm of their new-found joy, they became missionaries.

### 7. Its Motive not the Relief of Pain nor the Alleviation of Poverty.

In the scanty records that give us all the information we have, two points seem to stand out. The first missionaries do not seem to have been moved in any appreciable degree by the social or physical needs of the people among whom they worked. They healed the sick; but Paul, while he does not ignore this aspect of the work, gives to it in his extant epistles vastly less

attention than is given to the healing ministry of Jesus in the Gospels. There is no indication that the prevalence of disease in the countries he visited formed any part of the motive for his missionary tours.

Paul was interested in the problem of poverty, and gave much time and thought to the question of ways and means of alleviating the (perhaps largely voluntary) poverty of the Jerusalem Church. It is one of the curiosities of the literature he has left us that he shows so little interest in the poverty of those outside the church. Paul's work evidently lay largely among the poor of the big cities. It is quite certain that the alleviation of their poverty was not among his primary missionary aims. Doubtless, slaves and freedmen formed no inconsiderable portion of the membership of some of the first churches. Far from Paul starting an anti-slavery crusade, we are not quite certain that he advised slaves to accept their freedom if they got the opportunity.

In part this is explained by the consideration that, during much of his ministry, Paul was looking for a speedy end of the world and the return of Christ. But in part it means also that Paul's thoughts belonged to a sphere where questions of health and money and social status were, comparatively speaking, irrelevant; he was dealing with bigger issues. This suggests the other point.

### 8. Nor Primarily Moral Reform.

If Paul and the other missionaries were not out to deal with problems of health or of poverty or of class distinctions, it would not be quite correct even to say that the issues they were concerned with were primarily ethical. The Christians had inherited from the Jewish prophets the teaching that God is a God of righteous-

ness, that he cannot approve moral evil in any shape or form. Through the teaching and the life of Jesus, this truth had been burned into the minds of his followers, even the humblest of them, as perhaps it has never penetrated the minds of the devotees of any other religion. All through the New Testament, even in its most metaphysical sections, we are made to feel that to be a disciple of Jesus is in the first place to be a pure and upright man. We can never be sufficiently grateful that Paul especially saw this so clearly, lived it so strenuously, and insisted on it so pertinaciously. Yet Paul would never have agreed that he was simply trying to make men better. It was their salvation that he sought; to save a soul was something bigger than to reform a character. Like the writer "To the Hebrews," he sought to lead men to God through Jesus; like him, he lived in a world of unseen realities and worked for the eternal.

### 9. The Conception of Christianity as a Religion of Healing Came Later.

At first, then, the missionary motive was not so much the needs of men, least of all their physical needs; but rather devotion to the risen Christ, zeal that the Crucified should be glorified. It was at a later stage, as the earthly ministry of Jesus receded further and further into the past, that his followers began to be moved by the sorrows and sufferings of men, to realize in their own experience the truth that what they did to the humblest of the brethren of the Lord they did to the Lord himself. Christianity became explicitly, what it had always been implicitly, a religion of healing, for body and for soul. Later still, zealous Christians began to think of salvation in terms of the nation rather than of the individual, and the phenomenon of national

conversion began to appear. Along with this went the feeling that the primary missionary aim was not so much the glory of Christ as the glory of the church of Christ.

### 10. Deliverance from Eternal Punishment as a Missionary Motive.

Within the lifetime of some who are not yet old, it was customary to appeal for missionaries in order to "save souls from hell," the idea being that the people of the "heathen" world were "going down," as it was phrased, to an eternity of physical torture, particulars of which were given. If any ever went abroad as a result of such appeals, one cannot help wondering what impression of God and of the Gospel they left on the minds of those they sought to evangelize. But we must not rashly assume that this was ever the burden of the preaching of any generation of missionaries, at least of educated missionaries. Men are often better than their creed. A redeeming common sense—or shall we call it rather the grace of God?—often prevents them from carrying to their logical conclusions the things they think they believe. There is an educational discipline also in contact with those whose eternal fate we so lightly decide. It is easy to consign to eternal torture unknown and hardly imaginable "heathen"; it is not so easy thus to dispose of our faithful domestic, or of our partner or opponent in many a game of lawn tennis, or of the lawyer who has so often freely placed his legal knowledge at our disposal.

This kind of appeal is seldom now heard among the educated. It had this immense advantage that those who made the appeal and those who listened to it alike knew exactly what they were trying to do, and had the most urgent reason for doing it as speedily and as

expeditiously as possible. This note of urgency is characteristic of the missionary preaching of Jesus. Is it possible to retain it with the changed conception of the form of the missionary task that prevails in our day? We now think less of saving the soul and more of saving the man or woman. There is a tendency to revert to mediæval conceptions of national conversion, and great importance is attached to programmes that are, in the large sense of the word, educational.

One could wish that contemporary missionary biographers were sometimes more explicit on the aspects of the Christian message stressed by their heroes and their heroines, yet there is no lack of material to show the missionary motives believed to be effective in this generation.

### 11. The Reform of Social Abuses a Permanent Missionary Task.

At the beginning of this century, Doctor James S. Dennis published a book on Christian Missions and Social Progress. The first volume dwelt on the social evils of the non-Christian world: on the vices of individuals, such as intemperance, gambling, self-torture, suicide, and sexual vice; on family social evils, especially the degradation of women, polygamy and concubinage, child marriage and widowhood, adultery and divorce, and infanticide; on tribal social abuses, such as the slave trade, cannibalism, human sacrifice, cruel ordeals, inhuman punishments, and torture; on general social evils, such as ignorance, quackery, witchcraft, and neglect of the poor and the sick. Next were discussed political injustice and civil tyranny, corruption and bribery, massacre and pillage, low standards of commercial morality, and the moral scandals, superstitions, and cruelties of the non-Christian re-

ligions. In the second and third volumes the author went on to show how Christianity introduces new social ideals and, at least to some extent, carries them into practice.

These volumes by Doctor Dennis represent not unfairly the line of approach by which officials of missionary societies try to bring home to the rank and file of church members their responsibility for the non-Christian world. It cannot always be assumed that the missionary task, as presented to the home churches, represents the whole of that task as conceived by the missionaries. Thus we are told that so great a missionary as Doctor Duff, who was largely responsible for the extent to which higher education is used as a missionary method in India, in presenting the claims of the work to congregations in Scotland dwelt rather on the conversion of individuals as the motive, presumably because he believed the church was not yet ready for his more statesmanlike conception of the work to be done. Yet an account, such as we have already given, of the actual varied activities of contemporary missionaries suggests that for them the call of the non-Christian world is, in one aspect, a call to come in the spirit of the physician to deal with the sores of "heathendom" that Doctor Dennis enumerates.

### 12. The Missionary Motive in Modern Missionary Biography.

Again, missionary biography, even when there is no explicit inquiry into the missionary motive, does give us in some measure the point of view both of the biographer and of the subject of his study. We think of African biographies like those of Mary Slessor and Doctor Laws. These tell us of parts of the world in

which, when the missionary first saw them, life was one awful welter of ignorance and suffering, cruelty and lust; where nature, red in tooth and claw, was hardly less cruel than man; and the whole life, animate and inanimate, seemed crying out for redemption.

We turn to that accomplished scholar, musician, and missionary, Albert Schweitzer. Of all Africa's needs, it was her physical suffering that most appealed to him; especially the untold suffering that could be avoided or ended by a few simple drugs or a simple operation. Few even among missionaries can have given up a career so promising as did Doctor Schweitzer when, in response to the call of Africa, he partially abandoned the New Testament studies in which he had made for himself a name so brilliant, and began to qualify himself as a medical missionary. In *On the Edge of the Primeval Forest*, in moving words, he tries to make others feel the force of the conviction that sent him to Africa, that all we can do to alleviate the untold pain of the dwellers in that continent is but the beginning of our payment for all we have made Africa suffer. But though he does not dwell much on this thought, the spirit of the Master that breathes through his pages makes us realize that what Africa needs is not the physician but the Christian physician.

In China, pastor Tsi dealt much with the saving of souls in the old sense; but of the concrete forms in which his problem presented itself to his mind, two stood out in relief, one being the number of victims of the opium habit who sought in vain for deliverance; the other, gambling, which in China assumes epidemic proportions. To many Indian missionaries it would seem that their immediate task is to deal with the unbrotherliness of caste, the degrading conceptions of God involved in many forms of idol-worship, the pessimistic

outlook on life and the divorce of morality from a ritualistic religion.

### 13. Changing Conceptions of Salvation.

As a description of the missionary motive, any phrase including the New Testament word "salvation" seems to be somewhat out of favor at present, doubtless because of its association with a system of theology that has lost its grip on what is called the modern mind. At least on a superficial view, it would seem as if conceptions of salvation frequently changed. The claim has even been made that not a single idea now connected with the word formed any part of its content in the first Christian century. That is the kind of exaggerated statement which at least helps to call our attention to a truth. Salvation always means deliverance from what we most dread. As our conception of the great enemy changes, naturally the content of the term "salvation" changes with it.

The New Testament writers were not always very explicit about their hopes or their fears for men. We know that both Paul and the writer "To the Hebrews" were haunted by a fear that was driven out only by Christ, the fear of death; by which they meant something more than physical death. What they had in mind was a destruction that was moral and spiritual as well as physical, a fear not only of passing away, though it was that too, but of what Paul calls "corruption." To the illiterate the fear will take the form of physical or semi-physical pains and penalties beyond the grave. To some "salvation" involves the permanence of all that is worthy in the individual personality; others think of it in terms of the nation or the race. To Paul, the ideal in life or in death was to know Christ. To the enlightened Christian mind, eternal

life is to know God and Jesus Christ, whom he has sent.

The social and humanitarian motives that prevail in so much religious work to-day are a reaction, an altogether healthy reaction, from an age of comparative indifference to the claims of kindliness or even of social justice; to the Christian call for consideration for the weak, the suffering, and the defenceless. Yet throughout the ministry of Jesus, the primary note in his teaching was the call to repentance. We tend to strain after the physical basis of comfort for ourselves and others, hoping that somehow the Kingdom of God will be added to our comforts. Jesus put the Kingdom and our comforts in the inverse order. His mission was to lead to God men whose origin and destiny was God. Work which has a more transient impulse than this is not, in the historic sense, Christian missionary work.

# IX

## INEVITABLE HANDICAPS IN MISSIONARY WORK

The astonishing success of Christianity in moulding to its ways of thought and life the peoples it has sought to influence, has been achieved in spite of certain handicaps, which go far to explain those cases where the response to its approach has been less definite and more reluctant than might reasonably have been anticipated. Some of the difficulties that beset the forward march of Christianity are inherent in the nature of the religion and the conditions under which it works; for others the church or the missionary is responsible. Let us look first at the inevitable handicaps under which the mission work of Christianity is done.

### 1. Christian Influences Part of an Amalgam.

In the first place, the seed of Christian truth is seldom allowed to develop its proper fruit without the interference of hostile influences. The Gospel message does not work in isolation; with the sower of wheat goes the sower of darnel. The total impression which the Christian world makes on the non-Christian is a composite impression produced by the working of Western ideals, not only in religion but also in trade and commerce, in industry and politics, in military affairs, in social life, in literature, in sport and amusement. In some measure this is an asset. The high sense of responsibility, the integrity and justice, the courage and spirit of self-sacrificing service that inspire so much of the white man's work for the non-Christian world are

a useful commentary on the stress that Christianity always lays on character.

Yet there is much to be said on the other side. The non-Christian notices the large number of cases in which the white man shows no apparent interest in the religion he nominally professes. He is more puzzled by this fact than the Westerner, and can hardly be expected to recognize the extent to which the ethic of the least religious white man is derived from Christian tradition.

### 2. The Influence of Western Economic Systems.

Few would suggest that the social and economic systems of the West are concrete embodiments of the principles that Jesus taught; nor is the malign influence of the uglier sides of Western civilization confined to that which is exercised directly by such of its institutions as the non-Christian sees in operation. It is quite common to-day, perhaps chiefly in the Mohammedan world, for non-Christian newspapers to report and make unfavorable comments on such incidents in the Western world as can be made to point the moral that "Christianity has failed." Why the Christian spirit does not dominate, to a greater extent than it does, a civilization that is nominally Christian, is a question that the Christian cannot ultimately evade. In the meantime we simply note the point so often overlooked, that the church in her foreign enterprise suffers from this heavy handicap, that her distinctive message is presented as part of an amalgam which contains many elements indifferent or hostile to the Christian spirit.

The selfishness which is so commonly assumed as the governing principle in modern trade and industry, the relations of white men and colored women, the story

of the Indian opium export trade to China, and the scandalous traffic with the backward races in British intoxicating liquor, lend support to the constantly reiterated belief of the Oriental that the West is materialistic while the East is spiritual.

### 3. The Influence of Western Caste Systems.

Some features of "white" life seem to strike the Oriental as in peculiarly flagrant contradiction to the religion that the missionary teaches. One of the astonishing discoveries of the first generation of Christians was that God is no respecter of persons. As we shall see, the Hindu is greatly impressed with the extent to which in theory, and even largely in practice, the former caste distinctions of converts are forgotten in the Christian churches. Yet the non-Christian is well aware that the Westerner has his own more or less rigid social grades; sometimes, as among the Europeans of India, hardly distinguishable from caste divisions. He would be even more impressed with the fact, if he realized the extent to which questions of social precedence are given prominence even in the house of God. It is claimed for the Mohammedan, perhaps with some measure of truth, that while he denies *in toto* the doctrine of the brotherhood of man, within Islam itself he recognizes in the most practical way the social equality of all followers of the prophet, whatever their color, and that in the mosque even the Nawab [1] is only one of the band of worshipping brothers.

### 4. The Influence of Western Race Feeling.

It is a Christian axiom that God has made of one blood men of all nations; the first Christians were a brotherhood in name and in reality; in Christ Jesus,

[1] The chief of the state in some Indian principalities.

according to Paul, all our adventitious distinctions of sex, race, and culture are transcended. Yet it is obvious to the non-Christian that, speaking generally, every white man regards every colored man as a creature of a lower species, quite independently of his actual worth or achievements; and even in the Christian church, some of the hardest problems that face us to-day are connected with race questions.

**5. The Influence of Western Belief in Force.**

Perhaps no part of the teaching of Jesus makes a deeper impression on the non-Christian than the so-called "non-resistance" passages in the Sermon on the Mount; to him the Christian is pre-eminently the man who would rather suffer wrong than do wrong. Yet in his experience, the nations that call themselves Christian are just as ready as others to rely on the strong arm; nor is it easy to persuade him that our armed forces are always employed in a spirit of lofty chivalry or even of justice; while in private life the Christians he knows are not always remarkable for turning the other cheek.

One may grant that in this regard, no small part of the real handicap under which Christianity lies is the figurative and even paradoxical language in which Jesus sometimes expressed his ethical precepts. The fact remains that, even after making all due allowance for Oriental metaphor, Jesus pointed his followers to an altruistic way of life which, in their national affairs and to a large extent even in their private concerns, many of them profess to find impracticable.

**6. The Influence of Western Political Domination.**

The position has been further complicated by the fact that the pioneers of the Christian movement in non-Christian lands have usually been members of the

white races which, in recent times, have dominated the world politically. Latterly at least, white tutelage of the colored races has been viewed by the latter with increasing disfavor. One result of this state of things is that, in a large part of the non-Christian world, the mind of the youth, especially the educated youth, is obsessed with questions of politics. This is pre-eminently so in India. Faced with grave moral and social problems which they and they alone can solve, India's young men for the most part refuse to touch them. The political issue, they say, is paramount; first let political independence be achieved; all other questions, however important, can wait. That Christianity is the religion of the white man may at one time have prepossessed the colored man in its favor; if that claim can still be made, at least it is with much diminished confidence.

### 7. Christianity Regarded as the White Man's Religion.

Not only does Christianity go to the colored world as an exotic and as the white man's religion; but, no doubt largely because it is the white man's religion and comes clad in a Western dress, the process of acclimatization has been attended with considerable difficulty both in the East and in Africa. Several of the principal religions of China have reached her from other countries; but Christianity is said to be the only religion for which the epithet "foreign" is specially reserved. In India, while the extent to which the creed, life, and worship of the Christian Church are Western has been greatly exaggerated, yet an indigenous Christianity which will appeal to the Hindu and the Mussulman as an Indian religion is only now beginning to take root.

Not only does the foreignness of the Christian organi-

zation disguise the true nature of its message, but the foreignness of the missionary complicates his relations with the "native" Christians. Judged by the standards of the European community of which he is a member, he is a poor man; but, poor as he is, he is a prince in comparison with most of his converts. He usually lives in a house which seems to them palatial; his dress, the kind of food he eats, his table manners, and general habits of life, are all calculated to create the impression of a gulf between him and his native colleagues and converts. He is increasingly conscious of this racial gulf; perhaps is even in a mood to emphasize and exaggerate it.

Nor is it possible for the missionary altogether to overcome the difficulty by any external adaptation to his environment. In China it seems to be much less common than formerly for missionaries to adopt the native dress; in India, except in the case of the Salvation Army, this has not been the practice. A fondness for pungent curries may help to endear the missionary to his Indian brother; but, whatever he wears or eats, the white man, for good or evil, remains obviously white and foreign. The Oriental knows very well whether the white man regards him as a "native" or as a man. It is a testimony to the good sense and Christian feeling of both sides that, until recently, the somewhat anomalous position proved so little of a barrier to friendly relations.

### 8. The Inability of Christianity to Make Moral Compromises.

But perhaps the chief discouragement to the acceptance of Christianity comes from its inability to make compromises on moral questions. The Gospel comes now, as always, bringing deliverance to the captive

and recovering of sight to the blind; striking off shackles and calling on the lame to rise and walk. But it comes also with its old insistence on the strait road and the narrow door. It is not only for the caste Hindu that loyalty to the Gospel summons involves the cutting off of a right hand or the gouging out of a right eye. In all countries there are those who hear the "Sell all that thou hast," and who go away crestfallen because they have great possessions.

Apart from these stern initial choices, the Gospel demands are hard. To lay aside one's birthright of inherited privilege, to eat with the common or unclean, to practise scrupulous honesty and sobriety, sexual purity and monogamy—perhaps only those who have been brought up in an atmosphere where no such demands are made can quite realize what these things mean. Would Mohammedanism have swept sections of Africa as it has done, if it had not sanctioned polygamy, the subjection of woman, and the insistence on sex as her principal function?

Christianity from the first has stood for moral and especially for sexual purity. The ascetic ideals which so early began to prevail in the church, and which played so large a part in the ecclesiastical life of the Middle Ages, were, at least in part, the revolt of men and women who had been touched with the Christian spirit, against the immorality they saw all around them. The same Gospels that tell us how the message of Jesus came like an emancipating word to the tax-gatherers, the "sinners," the outcasts, tell us also of Jesus' searching demand for purity; purity not only of life but of motive, of thought, of look. They narrate Jesus' judgment on divorce, his insistence on the divine conception of marriage. In them we read of men who, when they followed Jesus, were called on to ignore even

the dearest of human ties and the most prized of human gifts in their search for the one thing that counts in God's sight.

### 9. The Attitude of Christianity Toward Polygamous Converts.

However great may be the temptation at times to open the door a little wider, to make the road a little broader, to meet the difficulties of aspirants to discipleship, to provide relief for what may seem to be almost unendurable cases of hardship, the church learns afresh, sometimes by painful experience, that the way of compromise with moral wrong is never the Christian way. In every mission field where polygamy is practised by non-Christians, difficult questions arise about the reception into the church of polygamous converts. Is the convert to be compelled to part from all his wives except one, and, if so, which one? Perplexing as the question is when the wives are not willing to follow their husband into the Christian church, it is perhaps even more baffling when they are.

Perhaps there is hardly any important question of ecclesiastical polity where we have suffered more from our almost total exclusion of women from the councils of the church. Discussion has proceeded almost entirely on considerations of expediency, of the hardship of this course or that for the man or the woman, of the exegesis, usually the absurd exegesis, of certain texts of Scripture. We have seldom heard any reference to the moral effects of polygamy on the man. Moreover, it is constantly assumed that the woman will prefer to continue in the marriage rather than occupy the ambiguous position of a discarded wife. Is there no possibility that a "native" wife, who had come under the influence of lady missionaries, would acquire such a dis-

taste for the position of a fractional wife that almost any alternative would seem to her preferable? At least, it is a question which an assembly composed of men is not qualified to answer.

The problem is not so very serious where only sporadic cases occur. In mission fields where polygamy is wide-spread and Christianity is increasingly popular, the church has to recognize, or to learn at a price, that the hard way may be the right way. If polygamy is ever under any pretext sanctioned in the church, men of high social standing can always be trusted to insist that their case comes under the exception and not under the rule. In any case, the spectacle presented to the young of polygamists being welcomed as members of the church, must give a distorted impression of Christian teaching such as no argument can efface.

# X

## SELF-IMPOSED HINDRANCES TO MISSIONS

Besides the inevitable handicaps that impede the church in her mission to those of other faiths, there are other burdens, which are self-imposed. The primary task of the missionary is to plant, in the new countries to which he goes, the germ of the new life. He is well aware that the young plant when it appears will, for a time, need careful nursing; for cold winds of indifference, hostility, or even persecution will blow upon it; while, in the absence of the inspiration that comes from a vigorous Christian society, it will suffer from drought. Sooner or later, however, the new plant will become acclimatized, will be able to dispense with hothouse methods, to live and to propagate itself without the gardener's care.

### 1. Missions a Temporary Phenomenon.

Yet it is quite common to hear and to see appeals for missionary effort which seem to be based on the assumption that the missionary throughout is to be the moving spirit. We are given statistics of areas to be covered, the number of people to be won, and the territory for which each mission is responsible. Sometimes, too, we are given figures of the number of missionaries required to cover the ground with any degree of thoroughness.

When Christian people remain unmoved by such appeals, as very generally they do, their indifference is doubtless explained in part by want of imagination; but is it not also due in part to the half-conscious

realization that this is not how Christianity spreads as a matter of fact? Unless Christianity is to remain forever an exotic in any given country, the missionary and all his works are temporary phenomena in its history. The time must come when the indigenous church and its individual members will realize the privilege and responsibility of passing on to their countrymen the message of the new way of life.

The statistics to which reference has been made are not only depressing in themselves, but, by suggesting that the task is one of impossible magnitude, they are apt to discourage enthusiasm. If the work is all to be done by foreign churches, and is far beyond the actual capacity of the foreign churches, at least with their present standards, obviously there is a "catch" somewhere. One has to grant that certain of the mission churches, notably those of India, have not, as yet, shown great capacity for self-propagation. For this, in the case of the Indian churches, there are various reasons. The Indian is not by nature an enthusiastic person, for which, in turn, the climate is partly responsible. But perhaps the chief difficulty is that men, whose ancestors have for many centuries been members of a rigid caste system, lose in a measure the sense of individual responsibility and the capacity for individual initiative; though there is also the obvious consideration that the same causes that have made the missionary task so difficult among caste Hindus have discouraged Indian Christians from seriously attempting it.

But may not the idea behind our missionary aims have, without any intention on our part, communicated itself to the Indian Christian mind: the idea, namely, that the work of pioneering, preparing, and organizing is always to be done by the foreign churches with which

rests the final responsibility? It is true that neither the foreign church at the base, nor its representatives on the field, really think so; but they often speak as if they did. Missionaries are never tired of insisting that only the people of the country can effectively bring the Gospel message to their own countrymen; even in India, schemes of "devolution" as it is called, have been begun by which responsibility for evangelistic work is to be gradually transferred from the mission board to the indigenous church. It would be less depressing for mission interests and more encouraging for those among whom they work, if they emphasized more than they do that the whole conception of a "mission" is a transitional stage in the Christian history of any country.

**2. Christianity's Ecclesiastical Divisions.**

The hindrance caused by the ecclesiastical divisions of Christian people is less serious than might be supposed, and the harm they undoubtedly do is largely indirect. The acceptance of the principle of mutual delimitation of territory or of forms of work, and, in general, those friendly understandings between agencies that come under the general head of "comity of missions," have reduced to a minimum the scandal of rival organizations competing for converts in the same field; though it would be too optimistic to suggest that the spectacle is never to be seen. In spite of this, to the non-Christian onlooker, one of the obvious facts of the Christian enterprise as he sees it, is that the organizations which bring the message, when not actually hostile to each other or even rivals, are at least different; that they represent widely different forms, not only of the Christian creed and of Christian worship but even to some extent of the Christian life.

This provides the non-Christian with the opportunity

of making depreciatory comparisons. The scandal of course is greatest where any denomination unchurches others, refuses to acknowledge their ministry or sacraments, and especially where Christians cannot freely and jointly participate in the church's central act of worship. Even the Hindu can contrive to forget the proverbial fissiparous tendencies of his own religion as he looks at the multitude of Christian sects.

The sectarianism of Protestantism complicates also the relation of the home churches to the young churches on the mission field. Some of these churches are developing strongly nationalist tendencies and feel that the link that unites them to a church group in Europe or elsewhere abroad, has become more of a hindrance than a help. The work of cutting the official link that has bound the mother churches to the daughter churches, of establishing self-governing churches in the mission fields, and even of uniting various indigenous churches of different ecclesiastical antecedents, has already made striking progress. Even so, there is a strong feeling that the unifying process is being seriously hindered by the ecclesiastical traditions inherited from the West. Speaking generally, the young churches are far more ready for a great uniting movement than are the parent churches that have sponsored them.

The "native" Christians have shown a certain tendency to be very well pleased with themselves for their advanced attitude toward union and to feel a certain superiority over the older churches that prefer to remain apart. We shall have to wait for some generations or even for centuries before we know whether these feelings are justified. They are inclined to forget that it is easy for them to transcend the differences of creed, forms of worship and church government that have split the church in the West, since historically these

differences mean nothing to them. What seems to the impartial outsider nothing but schism is often to those who view it from the inside a precious heritage, bound up with sacred memories of prophet and saint and martyr. God grant that the new churches may profit by the sad experience of the older churches! Time will tell. They are at least entitled to claim that, if differences are to arise, they should be their own differences and not ours. In the meantime our church divisions, if Christian good-will has shorn them of part of their power to do evil, are a real hindrance to the church in its relations both to non-Christians and to converts.

### 3. An Excessive Reliance on Organization.

Again, in this branch of the work of the church, have we not in some measure fallen victims to the twentieth century temptation to trust to money, machinery, and programmes, rather than to the power of the living spirit? When the report of the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910 was published, one of the strongest impressions left on the mind from the perusal of it was that in this century every one is to be organized into the Kingdom. We recognize that, almost from the beginning, questions of organization and finance pressed on the churches; and that, when the creative days were past, it was not only inevitable but was of great advantage that organization, creeds, and officials should arise to conserve what had been won by men on fire with the spirit of God.

Have we not tended in our foreign mission work to omit this creative period and to proceed directly to the later organizing stage? We know that some measure of organization is always needed, that under the present system harassed secretaries and treasurers have to

find money somewhere, and that, as things are to-day, advertising is a key that unlocks many doors. We are prepared to try to believe that even statistical reports, however little they may be read and however much soul-destroying work may go into the preparation of them, may have some useful function to perform in the work of bringing to men the gospel of life. We realize that, while prayer is work, it can never quite take the place of other work. Yet when we read the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, read of the new life that was visibly pulsing in the world when organization was at a minimum, it is difficult to resist the impression that too much is made of the machine, and too little of the divine power which will always work with us when we allow ourselves to work with it, when our efforts are in co-operation with and not in substitution for the power of God.

### 4. The Christian Use of Military Metaphors.

In this connection we have to ask ourselves whether we have not been too ready to employ military metaphors. We grant that Paul was fond of military metaphors; partly, perhaps, because in the course of his travels he was constantly brought into contact with the visible might of Rome, and realized the extent to which what men called greatness depended on military strength. To Jesus, on the other hand, working in the villages and country towns of Galilee, peaceful figures would more readily suggest themselves. The fact remains that no one, playing a prominent part in the public life of that day, could be ignorant of the part that armed force played in the Roman Empire. It was no mere accident that, when the Gadarene demoniac wanted to express the resistless might of the demonic impulses within him, the image that occurred

to him was that of the Roman legion. There is surely significance in the fact that Jesus hardly ever used metaphors borrowed from warfare and almost seems deliberately to have avoided them.

This consideration is bound up with the fact, a curious fact, as it seems to many, that Jesus seldom went beyond the confines of Jewry, and that his mission was in no sense a campaign against heathenism. When the question of other religious emerged, whether in the course of his own experience or as a subject of historical teaching, the one point he emphasized was that a saving faith in God often exists in quarters where the narrow-minded would least expect it. As Jesus did not in his thought divide men into rich and poor, cultured and ignorant, neither did he divide them into Jew and heathen. He saw men as God sees them, turning to the light that illumines every man or else blinding their eyes to the light. It is true that Jesus did conceive his work in one aspect of it as a warfare against Satan and his demonic hosts; but in so far as he sought to uproot all entrenched evil from the minds of men, the enemy was not heathenism but godlessness.

The military metaphor is not so very misleading, if we do not half-consciously include among the enemies we contend against, not only religious and ethical systems that seem to lead men away from God, but even the human representatives of these systems. It is a lesson our own age needs much less than some of its predecessors. Doctor Fairweather [1] has recently been reminding us that "the good Dean Prideaux could still speak of Zoroaster as 'this famous impostor' and says of him and of Mahomet, 'Both of them were very crafty knaves.' And in general no milder epithets

[1] *Jesus and the Greeks.*

were applied to Buddha and Confucius." We do not speak like that now.

Yet our metaphors have a strange power over us; and our constant talk of "the home base," "the foreign field," "the campaign," of "strategic points," of "triumphs" and "retreats," may have a greater influence than we know in putting us into a wrong relation to those we seek to influence. In this period of revulsion against war and all that it stands for, would it not be possible in large measure to abandon our warlike language and to remember that our mission is to lead to God through Jesus Christ men and women in whose hearts the spirit of the Father God is already striving?

**5. Emphasis on Non-Essentials.**

Another question is presenting itself with some insistence before the leaders in the Christian enterprise. Have we been inclined to stress the metaphysics of Christianity at the expense of its religious teaching? Have we tended to overestimate the importance of questions of literary criticism, theology, and philosophy, and to give to faith in God and the clean, unselfish life a less central place than Jesus gave them? Whatever may be our answer to these questions, might we not, in our concern for what have been called the fundamental truths, make more explicit than we sometimes do, that the fundamental thing in Christianity is that it seeks to lead men to God through Jesus Christ and to set before them the Christian way of life? The last of the documents that comprise our New Testament was written at the earliest toward the end of the first Christian century; the collected documents do not seem to have been recognized as a New Testament till toward the end of the second century. It is largely to the New Testament that we owe our knowledge of

Jesus; but the message of God that speaks to us from the pages of the New Testament needs no artificial buttressing. Its authority resides in itself, not in any testimony that we can give to it. In defining the relation of a Christian to the New Testament, we do well to ask ourselves, whether in our zeal for the Book and our gratitude for all we have learned from it, we are giving a definition that would exclude from the Christian fellowship all the followers of Jesus mentioned in the New Testament? The worker on the frontiers of Christianity must be clear in his own mind whether a tendency to exalt the Book at the expense of the Person may not be a real temptation.

**6. Misunderstandings of Christian Teachings.**

It is very possible also, among a people who have not the background of our religious history, to teach the tenets of the Christian faith in a way that leads to serious misunderstanding. When the Moslem believes that we teach that Jesus is Son of God in a purely physical sense, can we always absolve ourselves from all blame? On the subject of the Trinity, too, have we not tended to reverse the natural order of things? The doctrine of the Trinity was not primarily a product of the thought of any theologian, or of any body of theologians; it was an interpretation of an experience. Even before they knew Jesus, his first followers had all the Jew's knowledge of God. Through direct contact with him, or through the preaching of the missionaries, they came to know God in Jesus. In the new life, the fruits of which they saw all around them and whose influence they themselves experienced, they saw a manifestation of God's Holy Spirit.

The experiences came first; the formulation of them into the doctrine of the Trinity came later. Is it possi-

ble for men who have never had this experience of the Trinity to reach any intelligent conception of what it means? Whatever may be the answer to that question and wherever the fault may lie, we seem to leave on the minds of many non-Christians the impression that the Christian believes in three Gods.

Is the resurrection of Jesus ever taught in such a way as to obscure its central significance? The whole New Testament bears witness to the belief of the first generation of Christians that they were still in vital contact with Jesus, more vital and uninterrupted than had been possible in the days of his flesh; that his death had not removed him from them, but had brought them into the closest intimacy with him; that the fellowship of Christians with each other was a fellowship with the living Christ; and that the power that was making them new men, and through them making the world a new world, came from God through the risen Christ. Whatever else the resurrection may mean, surely this, and nothing less than this, is the burden of the New Testament teaching on the subject.

### 7. The Essential Christian Message.

We fully realize the impossibility of reproducing the simplicity of any past age; whether it be the simplicity of an ancient social, industrial, and political life, supposed to be happier than our own, or the simplicity of a primitive creed. We recognize also the folly of trying to separate the Christian ethic from the Christian religion, or the Christian religion from Christian theology. In particular, the question of "the person of Christ" will arise and must be dealt with. If the teaching of Jesus were just one more guess at truth by one who had no more facility for reaching it than we have, then

the strength of the Christian appeal would be immediately weakened.

While all this is so, there is a very real question whether, by a misplaced emphasis on even important items in the Christian creed, we do not at times obscure the light of the Light of the World, hide the beauty and the power that through the ages have won men's hearts, forget and lead others to forget that the core of all Christian doctrine is that Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; that the text of all Christian preaching is: Let us draw near to God through Jesus Christ.

# XI

## THE ATTRACTIVE POWER OF CHRISTIANITY

We sometimes speak vaguely of the power of Christianity to attract to itself men of all races and of all religions. In practice, however, it was true in the early centuries, as it is to-day, that men were won, not by the Christian message in its completeness, but by some one aspect of it that made a special appeal to them in their particular circumstances.

### 1. Its Teaching Regarding the Unity of God.

It was a true Christian instinct that put in the forefront of the creed, belief in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of all things visible and invisible. When Indian Buddhists deified the Buddha, in contradiction of his own teaching which denied the existence not only of God but of soul, they were only responding to the same instinct of the human heart which inspired Augustine to the prayer recorded on the first page of his *Confessions:* "Thou hast made us for thyself, and our hearts are restless till they rest in thee."

It may be the case that most polytheists concentrate their worship on one of the many gods in whose existence they believe; it is the case that many of them believe in the great Spirit behind and above all the gods that are its partial manifestations. Yet a house divided against itself cannot stand. One of the discoveries of modern psychology is that the mind is a unity, not a number of faculties tied together as with a string. The belief that the world is at the mercy of powers, uncoordinated or even hostile to each other, must have a

paralyzing effect on human endeavor. This accounts for the extraordinary enthusiasm with which monotheists, like the Jews and the Mohammedans, hold and proclaim the belief that God is one, their mingled contempt for and fear of polytheism. If Christians do not always show the same militant joyousness in their assertion of the unity of God, the reason is to be found partly in the long centuries that have elapsed since Western Christendom had any direct experience of the blighting effects of polytheistic practice. Other items in the explanation are the ambiguity which belief in a personal Satan has introduced in so many minds into the Christian thought of God, and popular misconceptions of the meaning of the Trinity, which, while not exactly shaking men's faith that God is One, at least diminish the confidence and clarity with which the truth is held. In the early centuries the message of Christianity that God is Spirit and that God is One, gave it an immense advantage in dealing with the puerilities of an idolatrous polytheism.

**2. Its Teaching of Fellowship with God.**

Perhaps even more than the unity of God, the Christian conception of the character of God comes as a revelation to men accustomed to think of God as a metaphysical abstraction, or as a distant, unknown or malignant power. For Christians who have known since childhood the prayer-life and the faith of Jesus, it is difficult to conceive what it must mean, even for Mohammedans, to learn to think of God as one who loves them and whom they can love and trust, one who would have them come to Him, with whom they can have fellowship, who can hear and answer prayer.

One significant way in which the Christian conception of the Father God makes itself felt, in contrast

with non-Christian ideas of God, is that, wherever Christianity understands itself, the worship of God is conducted in the mother tongue of the worshipper. There is nothing accidental about the language in which the story of Jesus is told in the Gospels. Based as it is on the model of the historical books of the Hebrew Old Testament, it combines the majesty of the divine things of which it speaks with the simplicity of the little child. The men who, in the fourteenth century and later, were willing to give their lives that the people of England might have the Bible in their mother tongue, had penetrated one of the secrets of the power of the Christian religion. It is calculated that the language in which the Mohammedan Scriptures are read as scripture, and the entire canonical devotional exercises are conducted, is intelligible to only one in a thousand of Indian Mohammedans. To the vast majority of Hindus, also, the language in which prayers are offered and the ritual is conducted is an unknown tongue. The Christian insistence that God speaks to man with an intelligible voice, and that man must speak to God with an intelligent voice, is just another aspect of the fact that Christianity is not a philosophy but a life, a religion not for the scholar but for the common man and woman.

### 3. Its Presentation of Jesus Christ as the Supreme Revelation of God.

That Jesus Christ is the supreme revelation of God is another truth that satisfies a fundamental need of the human mind. Most men are so made that they must find God manifest in the flesh or make for themselves a manifest God out of wood or stone. That God is Spirit and that God is One, are incomplete truths without the other, that the Word became flesh and taber-

nacled among us and we beheld his glory. Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of the Arya Samaj, has stated that the first thing which disgusted him, as a boy of fourteen, with popular Hinduism, was his experience in Siva's temple on the sacred night of Sivaratri. It seemed to him incredible that the hideous emblem of Siva bestriding his bull could really be the Mahadeva, the Great Deity, the divine hero of the stories told in his sacred books. He was particularly struck by the fact that his father and the temple servants fell asleep, though professedly believing that sleep on this sacred night robbed the worshipper of the good effect of his devotion, and the "god" showed no resentment when rats polluted his body by running over it.[1]

### 4. The Christian Attitude Toward Idolatry.

One would rank high among the achievements of missions the work they have done in protesting, in simply protesting, even if sometimes ineffectively, against idolatry. The rationale of the effects of idol-worship is perhaps imperfectly understood, but about the fact there can surely be no doubt. It is still as true to-day as it was when Paul wrote the first chapter of Romans that idol-worship is as degrading mentally and morally as it is spiritually. Keshab Chandra Sen, third leader of the Brahma Samaj, said to his Indian fellow countrymen: "There can be no doubt that the root of all evils which affect Hindu society, that which constitutes the chief cause of its degradation, is idolatry. Idolatry is the curse of Hindustan, the deadly canker that has eaten into the vitals of native society." [2] This was written in the days when pious Hindus looked

[1] See quotation from his autobiography in Farquhar's *Modern Religious Movements in India*, pp. 102 ff.

[2] Dennis, *Christian Missions and Social Progress*, I, p. 310.

at their religious customs with unprejudiced eyes in the new, clear light that Christianity gave, long before Mrs. Besant came with her sophistries to teach them that the idol was not just a piece of stone, but was magnetized by divine ceremonies into an object fit to be used in worship.

People who have a spiritual religion and who take it seriously have for idols an almost physical aversion and contempt. We know the mixture of fear and loathing that the spiritually minded Jews had for the idolatrous pagan worship with which they were so often surrounded, and how that feeling was explained by the ease with which the purer worship degenerated by infection into the grosser. Even an illiterate Mohammedan considers that the idolatry of the Hindu puts him on an immensely inferior level. Any one who has lived near a Hindu temple, heard the songs of the worshippers, sung to the accompaniment of the blowing of horns, the beating of drums, and the clashing of cymbals, grow louder and louder, more and more frenzied, as the night grew into the morning, until it almost seemed as if the devotees were drunk with religious enthusiasm, can understand how Paul seemed willing to grant that in the idol there really was a demonic rival to God.

### 5. The Arguments in Excuse of Idolatry.

We may freely allow the possibility that the use of idols is a stage, perhaps even a necessary stage, in the development from animism to a spiritual worship; that by the use of idols, multitudes have come into closer, perhaps even more uplifting, contact with the Power behind the universe than they could have reached without it. We gladly acknowledge the extent to which human life has been enriched in the departments of

literature, painting, sculpture, and architecture by the desire for a concrete representation of the divine Being. So far as present day issues are concerned, all that is irrelevant.

It is hardly necessary to discuss the contention that the idolater does not worship the idol, but uses it only as a help to concentration in his meditation on God. So far as the illiterate are concerned, we may say that they do not worship the idol, if we use the phrase in some recondite sense which deprives it of all meaning. As for the educated, when they take part in idolatrous ceremonies, they do so in many cases for prudential reasons under a conscious compromise with conscience. Yet this is by no means always the case. No one who has ever seen a band of Hindu students taking part in the annual Ganpati celebrations at a time of religious and political excitement, can doubt for a moment that, for the time at least, they use the image because they believe it brings them into contact with a real spirit. Sometimes, as with the Aryan invaders of India, idolatry was from the first a declension from a higher state of spiritual evolution. In the far East as well as in Palestine, idolatrous worship has shown an extraordinary power to seduce the followers of purer faiths with which it comes into contact.

Whatever truth there may be in apologies for the idolater of the past, there can be none for the man who, with a more spiritual conception of God full in view, deliberately chooses to continue his worship of the idol. We have spoken as if there were some one form of worship that could be labelled idolatry. In reality idols vary in their form, their art, and their suggestiveness as widely as the child's first scrawls and the plays of Shakespeare. Men of the West who speak with tolerance or even approval of idolatry are usually either

devoid of monotheistic passion or are ignorant of the ugly or even revolting objects which to millions on millions represent God. Whatever part the image may have played in ancient Greece, idol-worship as we see it to-day, in so many cases a conscious second best, seems to be as disabling mentally as it is degrading morally and spiritually. The persistent protest by Christian missionaries against the whole practice, a protest in which they are joined by Mohammedans, has in many lands prepared the way for a rise of the whole nation to a higher level of life.

In all our discussion of idol-worship, it is well to keep before our minds an actual picture of a typical idol of to-day. Let us take this description of Kali, the goddess who gives her name to a suburb from which Calcutta gets its name. It should be noted that Kali is the most popular deity among the teeming millions of Bengal, and that the Bengali has been described, with some justice, as the cleverest man on earth. "The image is a terrifying one—a black visage and ungainly form, a necklace of skulls, earrings of two dead bodies, a girdle of dead men's hands, four arms, one holding a knife dripping with blood, and another a severed head. The goddess is dancing a frenzied dance on the bodies of her victims, her eyes glaring in triumph, and her tongue protruding. She must be worshipped with sacrifices of blood." [1]

### 6. Christianity Delivers from Fear.

Again, the Western mind cannot realize from any corresponding experience how completely life, over a large part of the non-Christian world, is dominated by fear; fear of many kinds, but chiefly fear of the unknown and of spiritual powers of evil that are all-

[1] United Free Church of Scotland publications: *Our Mission in Bengal*, p. 14.

pervasive and ever lie in wait to hurt. The belief in evil demons that so terrorized the Galileans of our Lord's day, far from being a solitary phenomenon, has been and still is one of the commonest features of human life, and in our day oppresses the minds of multitudes in many parts of the world.

Warneck describes the Battak animist as "like a man driven in a frenzied pursuit round and round. Ghosts of the most diverse kind lurk in house and village; in the field they endanger the produce of labor; in the forest they terrify the woodcutter; in the bush they hunt the wanderer. From them come diseases, madness, death of cattle, and famine. Malicious demons surround women during pregnancy and at confinement; they lie in wait for the child from the day of its birth; they swarm round the houses at night; they spy through the chinks of the walls for the helpless victims. Gigantic spirits stride through the villages scattering epidemics around them; they lurk in the sea and rivers with the view of dragging travellers into the depths. They are not laughing fauns or mocking satyrs, but merciless messengers of death." [1]

That the illiterate have no monopoly of these disabling terrors is shown, to take a solitary instance, by Paul's hymn of hope at the end of the eighth chapter of Romans. He includes demonic principalities and powers among the agencies that have no power to harm the Christian, implying that in his belief these beings are shorn of their hurtful power only by the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ.

In the same passage, in his categories of the enemies of the Christian, Paul includes the "height" and the "depth," presumably the height into which the stars seem to rise as they come above the horizon and the

[1] *The Living Forces of the Gospel*, p. 109.

depth into which they seem to sink as they set. The words remind us of that form of fatalism, all but universal in history, which consists in belief in the influence, especially the malign influence, of the stars in human life. To this day the horoscope is an active institution even among the educated classes of India. It is true that delivery from this brooding terror may come from modern science as well as from the Christian faith; but the Christian faith wrought deliverance long before the days of modern science, and none can tell how much the spirit and the methods of modern science owe to the freedom that comes with Christianity.

### 7. Its Exaltation of the Worth of the Individual.

To slaves, to the low-castes and outcastes of India, and to all races and classes that have been denied the rights of personality, the Gospel of Christ comes as an evangel, with its message of the infinite worth of the individual. One has seen this Christian truth called an axiom. Perhaps the great majority of those who have been brought into contact with human life in its most degraded forms would confess that, far from regarding it as an axiom, they can believe in it at all only by an active exercise of faith and a resolute determination to try to see men in the light that Jesus gives. Yet experience in a hundred mission fields, of the possibilities of life at its most hopeless levels when touched by the vivifying power of the Christ, has abundantly justified the optimism of Jesus.

Other peoples have fallen as low in the scale of morals and of civilization as the outcastes of India; but surely no other people has reached the same depth of degradation in comparison with, and in the estimation of, their own neighbors and fellow citizens. Until lately, the

idea that they were fellow citizens would have been scouted by the great mass of those who lived in the same town or village; in large measure it would be still. In *The Outcastes' Hope* Mr. Godfrey E. Phillips rightly chooses, as one of the supreme tests of the worth of a religion, the attitude of its devotees in the face of an epidemic of cholera; striking as it does so suddenly, attended as it is by a mortality so great. His verdict is that "nothing is more certain than this—that in cholera time the outcaste Christians stand steady when their neighbors, by their very panic, are creating conditions favorable to the spread of the disease; that they meet the disease, when it does come to them, with the courage born of Christian faith, and that some of them, especially those who have become teachers, often show magnificent courage and self-sacrifice in ministering to the sufferers both heathen and Christian." He tells how on one occasion a pariah Christian who had become a catechist came into Secunderabad for cholera medicine. Just after he had reached the station, his own son in the Boys' Home was attacked by the disease; yet, to the surprise and disappointment of the missionary, the catechist hurried off at once. It was only later that the missionary learned, what the catechist was surprised he did not guess from the first, that the man was leaving his son with absolute confidence in the hands of the missionary, while he went off to be ready to help the people for whom he was himself responsible.

If to the sweepers of India and to the backward tribes of Africa, Christianity to-day sometimes appeals primarily as affording the opportunity of a rise in the social scale, it would be foolish to underestimate the value, even the religious value, of such a motive. Whatever increases self-respect or healthy social recog-

nition paves the way for the development of Christian character.

8. Its Noble Ethical Demands.

If the high moral demands of Christianity form, in the case of many, an obstacle to the acceptance of the Gospel, it is to the credit of human nature that in these same moral demands lies for many the drawing power of the Christian faith. Man is made in God's image in this sense, that the uncompromising ethical claims of Jesus wake an answering echo in minds which, till they heard them, hardly knew what it was they craved. One of the anomalies of religious life to-day is that, while Christians are puzzled by the Sermon on the Mount and have in many cases the greatest difficulty in relating it to their lives, outside of Christendom there is hardly any part of the New Testament that makes a stronger appeal. One has heard of an Indian being led to become a Christian through finding on the ground beside a railway track a torn leaf containing some verses from the fifth chapter of Matthew.

Even those who thought they knew something of the power of the Gospel have been surprised to find how infectious is the spirit of Christian service. The Servants of India Society, founded by the late Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, is largely modelled on the Christian missionary societies, and, at least in the intention of its founder, even more stringent renunciation is demanded of its members than in the case of most missionaries. The ideals of this society and of others similar in India are all the more striking, when we remember that, according to the theory of Hinduism, all help given to the distressed is a needless and useless interference with the law of karma, or retribution. One has seen Hindu students, busy men working for their

university degree, gathering low-caste boys and men of the neighborhood into a night school, and night after night patiently teaching them to read and write and work sums. Not so long before, the very presence of the outcastes in the same room would have defiled these Brahmins and Marathas. As one saw the students patiently bending over the slates and books of these same pariahs, and asked oneself what had made the difference, one knew of no answer, save that, almost unconsciously to themselves, perhaps in a measure against their wills, their hearts had been captivated by the spirit of Him who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.

**9. Its Exhibit of the Christian Home.**

If the demands of the Christian Gospel for purity, uprightness, and service appeal to the finer types of non-Christian men, still more do they appeal to women. The demand, made by Jesus and continued by Paul, for absolute sexual purity has been accepted by the church wherever she has understood her mission, and has made a deep impression on the non-Christian world. It does not seem too much to say that the women of any other religion are opposed to Christianity only in so far as they do not understand it. On the other hand, Christianity can flourish only where the women as well as the men understand and accept its teaching. The Christian home is at once the nursery, the stronghold, and the object lesson of the faith. It may be true, as has been said, that there are women in Africa who resent monogamy, since it means that the field work, commonly shared by several wives, has to be done by one. But surely the estimate is truer, that all women in their hearts hate polygamy, and welcome Christian standards of marriage and sex relations.

The spectacle of unmarried lady missionaries living lives of untrammelled freedom without a breath of suspicion being raised against them is, even to the educated non-Christian mind, one of the marvels of Christian achievement; just as in another way is the sight of those same women giving up attractive careers in their own country, enduring much physical discomfort, and often facing hardship and danger, all that they may spend themselves in the service of aliens.

In *The International Review of Missions* for April, 1914, Miss Kheroth M. Bose had a fine, suggestive article on "The Idea of Womanhood as a Factor in Missionary Work." The very possibility of such an article from the pen of an Indian lady is an excellent commentary on the Indian tradition to which Miss Bose refers, that, as a reward for his piety, it was promised to the Buddha that he should never, in any reincarnation, be born in hell, or as any kind of vermin, or as a woman. She quotes a leading Sikh who said to her that Christianity is the only religion for women. An Indian gentleman, whose wife had just died of plague, was telling a colleague of the writer of this book how much he had loved her. "I did not treat her as a wife," he said; "I treated her as an equal; I even allowed her to sit at the same table as myself." By this special mark of favor to his wife, this gentleman was breaking through what has been, alike in theory and practice, for the last two and a half millennia and right down to our own day, the traditional relation of Hindu husbands and wives.

### 10. Its Message of Hope for Those Who Have Failed.

While all this is true, it is only part of a truth. A religion that had no message save for men and women of high ideals could never have had the history that

Christianity has had. Where the Christian faith is true to itself, it must always deserve the taunt that Celsus, the most formidable of its early opponents, hurled against it in the second century. In other religions, he said, the invitation to draw near is for men of clean hands, upright life, and sensible speech; but the Christian call is to thieves, poisoners, and robbers of corpses, to the foolish and the simple-minded. There are men in India to-day, some even who call themselves Christians, who resent the swamping of the churches with the ignorant and the outcaste, but the apostle Paul saw more truly to the heart of the Christian message.

### 11. Its Call to Repentance.

In the apostolic days the summons to a repentance that issued in life, and the promise of the forgiveness of sins, played a large part in the Christian programme. The sense of sin, in the Christian interpretation of the phrase, can hardly be said to press heavily on the non-Christian mind of our day, any more than on the Christian mind. In its full development it is perhaps the result, rather than the occasion, of submission to Christian influence. In the world religions, especially in Hinduism, a transgression of the ritual requirements seems to many more heinous, and more urgently demands expiation, than an offence against moral law. Yet there are always some sensitive souls who can join from the heart in the fifty-first psalm; and, even where the sense of sin is less poignant, there is a more or less conscious feeling of estrangement from God. The motto of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Let us draw near to God through Jesus Christ," still points to one of the main sources of the power of the Christian faith; most of all when it comes as a welcome relief to the weary pilgrimages, the fatiguing and meaning-

less ceremonial, the stern ascetic discipline and self-torture, the sacrifices and works of merit, with which the votaries of other faiths seek for religious peace.

### 12. Its Conception of Life Eternal.

Essential to the power of Christianity is the sanity and the spirituality of its conception of death and what comes after death. Life is one of the key-words of the Christian faith; so often the ideals of other faiths suggest death rather than life. In life as the Christian knows it death is but an incident in the history of the person, suppression is never an end in itself, and the goal is not absorption in the "all." Life is vitality, progressive and expansive, whose destiny, unless we thwart it, is an ever larger fulfilment of aspirations that are worth fulfilling.

In the fifteenth chapter of I Corinthians, Paul protests against the conception of a bodiless immortality. For him the abiding life of the Christian is a life that can express itself, a life that can influence and be influenced, that can know and be known. This is only one aspect of the lofty teaching which Christianity inherits from its founder about the body, a teaching whose divine inspiration is all the more evident when it is placed over against the insulting treatment of the physical nature so often demanded by the conception of holiness in the world faiths. It has indeed been claimed, perhaps with some exaggeration, that Christianity was the first religion that took up a sane attitude to the body.

### 13. Its Contribution to National Regeneration.

Many, again, are looking to the religion of Jesus as their only hope for that social and national regeneration for which they believe their country is crying out.

The aspiration after social and political progress that has moved India so profoundly, progress to be secured by the work of Indians, can be traced directly or indirectly to Christian influence and runs directly counter to the teaching of Hindu philosophy. The Japanese statesman, Count Okuma, himself not a Christian, has put on record his recognition of the fact that the rejuvenation of Japan, China, and India dates from the time when they ceased to find their inspiration in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism and came under the influence of Christianity; not only directly through the missionaries, but indirectly through the medium of Christian ideals as embodied in English culture and expressed in the English language and in English literature.

# XII

## THE PROPER TESTS OF MISSIONARY PROGRESS

The preceding pages have been largely occupied with some account of the way in which, and the methods by which, the Gospel of Jesus has won its way to the hearts of such multitudes and has increasingly become a formative influence in the social relations of men. Considerations of space forbid much further discussion of this aspect of the subject; but it is necessary to say something, partly by way of warning, about the way in which progress is to be measured.

### 1. The Fallacy of Numerical Tests.

A study of the expansion of the church, as recorded in the pages of the New Testament, should make us very sceptical of the value of the tests we commonly apply; should remind us, indeed, of the very limited extent to which spiritual movements are amenable to the criteria of the mathematician or the surveyor.

Within the New Testament period, as we have seen, Christianity was spreading with extraordinary rapidity; whether we have regard to the geographical area affected, the variety of peoples and faiths that embraced the new religion, or the profundity of the revolution that was taking place where Christian thought and feeling held sway. Yet, to any eye except that of Christian faith, down to the end of the apostolic age, the whole number of Christians would have made a very unimposing show in any statistical report, if

any one had ever thought of preparing one. The first followers of Jesus do not seem to have been much given, any more than their Master, to the counting of heads. If regard were had, not only to the number of the converts, but to their social standing or want of standing, and to their educational qualifications, then to the broad-minded, level-headed man of the time, the Christian ambition of the world for Christ must have seemed about as ludicrous as any world ambition could well be.

Could they have looked into the future, in some respects at least, the outlook was calculated to damp the ardor of the Christians even more than a dispassionate study of the present. In our day Palestine and Northern Africa have to be recaptured for the faith, almost *de novo*. There is not one of the churches founded by Paul that we regard to-day as an important centre of Christian influence. Paul's imagination was captivated by the thought of winning for Christ the imperial city. It was not given to him to found the Church of Rome, but he gave witness there and wrote to the church of the capital his most elaborate and reasoned epistle. For centuries past, the influence of the Church of Rome has seemed to multitudes of Christians hardly less inimical to the faith than that of some of the non-Christian religions.

In spite of all this, Christianity is to-day the strongest moral force and the most uplifting spiritual influence in the world. The wind bloweth where it listeth. Facts like these make us chary alike of assessing the present and of prophesying the future.

Except in the hands of the most careful and conscientious experts, a mere handful in any country at any given time, statistics are notoriously misleading as applied in any social science. Used as a test of spiritual

progress amid unfamiliar surroundings, if they are to have any meaning at all, they must be used with special precautions. To begin with, statistics of the growth of a religion usually fail to distinguish between "conversions" and "natural increase" of population. They assume that each man counts for one and no man for more than one, that the drunken, degenerate "Christian" who hardly ever enters the church door is on a par with the Brahmin convert who, for his religious convictions, gave up fortune, family, and prospects.

### 2. Pitfalls of Conversion Figures.

Where figures of "conversions" are given, they usually fail to distinguish between the various social and religious strata from which the converts come. In India the change from the outcaste condition to Christianity is comparatively easy, and among the "untouchables" conversions take place by the thousand. Among Hindus of high caste, the difficulties of joining the Christian church are regarded by most as insurmountable, and in these classes converts are still reckoned by units. Figures, again, can take little account of those who are "almost persuaded" and who, without taking the decisive step are yet, within wide limits, living the Christian life. In the nature of the case, too, they leave out of account the whole of that influence of the Christian leaven in multitudes of lives and in many hearts which can never be tabulated.

On this subject it is sufficient to say that in every important country in the world there is a Christian church of great and growing influence, developing extensively in numbers and in geographical area; intensively in character, in independence of thought, and in the power and variety of self-expression.

### 3. The Christian Type of Face.

Once a missionary, being asked to give in the briefest compass some proof of the power of the Gospel among non-Christian peoples, replied that Christianity stamps itself on the face. The light of the body is the eye. An Indian Christian student writes thus, for *The Student World*, about the little village school of his boyhood, in which the Christian pupils were a tiny handful among the Hindus and Mohammedans. "Because [the Christians] are so few, and because in the life of boys religious differences do not stand in the way of physical and social mingling, one would not expect to discern any distinction between the Christian and the non-Christian. But government inspectors and other visitors are invariably right when they point to certain boys and ask them if they are not Christians. It is the more astonishing since there is a complete absence of such hints as caste-marks. When I visited the village school about two years ago, the teacher asked me how I was able to recognize the Christian boys, and I replied that there was an almost unmistakable gleam of bright hope reflected through the eyes." The same impression was made on Doctor Schweitzer on his first introduction to African Christians at Baraka, near Libreville, when on his way to his own station in Central Africa. He was greatly struck with the contrast between the clean, decently clothed Christians and the blacks of the seaports. "Even the faces are not the same. These had a free and yet modest look in them that cleared from my mind the haunting vision of sullen and unwilling subjection, mixed with insolence, which had hitherto looked at me out of the eyes of so many negroes."

### 4. Non-Missionary Christian Achievements.

In trying to judge the extent to which the introduction of Christianity has transformed the ideals of a non-Christian people, we have to remind ourselves that Christian influence is not wielded exclusively by professional missionaries. It is exercised also through Christian public influence and makes itself felt through the medium of English literature, and through the code of honor of Christian administrators and business men. Thus the abolition of public indecency in Hindu religious processions and of such cruel customs as suttee (which ordained that a Hindu widow must commit suicide, voluntarily or involuntarily, on her husband's funeral pyre) was largely the work of British government officials working in harmony with enlightened Indian opinion; while Indian industrial legislation for the protection of women and minors is ultimately inspired by public opinion in Britain. The introduction of the compulsory Sunday rest in Indian industries was greatly simplified by the extent to which the pioneers of the manufacturing industry in Eastern India had come from Scotland.

### 5. The Healing Ministry of Christianity.

The story of the healing ministry of the Gospel in our own day needs no elaboration; but only those who know at first hand something of the nameless and incalculable pain caused by the ravages of disease in tropical and semi-tropical countries, and of the needless aggravations of this pain due to the remedies prescribed by ignorant superstition, can in any degree know what it means to have a gospel that sends men and women forth on errands of healing.

Doctor Albert Schweitzer (we make no apology for

referring to him once more) gives a graphic account of the awful diseases of Central Africa, and of what the doctor, with Western science at his disposal, can do to help. He mentions in particular the recent discovery that arseno-benzol, injected into the veins of the arm, cures as if by magic the sores of the so-called "raspberry disease," from which almost all the negroes of the district suffer at some time or other; and the other new practice of employing emetin for the tropical dysentery of Africa, the use of which is followed at once by a great improvement and usually by a permanent cure. It would be worth while, he says, for a doctor to go to Central Africa, though he had no means of healing but those. He hints too—he can do no more than hint—at the suffering caused in the tropics by the diseases brought by Europeans to those "children of nature."

It is not always realized to what an extent some of the diseases that are the scourges of the East, like bubonic plague, cholera, malarial fever, and leprosy, are preventable. Yet, in dealing with backward peoples, the work of preventing them requires something more than the issue of government orders and the provision of up-to-date equipment. These may completely fail unless, by explanations given in the spirit of Christian consideration, we can win the confidence of the people. This work is being done by missionaries, and by many who are not missionaries but who draw their inspiration from the same source.

### 6. Its Work of Education a Bulwark Against Agnosticism and Atheism.

We should realize better what Christian missions have done, could we for a moment get a glimpse of the world as it would have been had the work of these

missions never been undertaken. Modern knowledge and modern ways of looking at the world have everywhere influenced multitudes in the great centres of the world and in many countries have penetrated far from the highways. The new outlook is often quite incompatible with the old religions, which, however unsatisfactory as religions, were yet the only basis of morality the people knew. It is a perilous business to undermine the foundations of the moral life of a nation; yet that is what has been happening in many of the great countries of the world.

Some of the problems of the Orient would be better understood than they are, were the extent realized to which Western education has been producing vast numbers of educated men who are in fact agnostics; consciously and professedly so, as in the case of many Japanese; less frankly and perhaps less consciously so, as in the case of many Hindus. When the leaders of a nation have no positive religious beliefs on which to build a morally effective life, the nation is in peril. That the situation has not become disastrous is in large measure the result of the work of Christian schools and colleges, scattered throughout the non-Christian world; whose teachers have never ceased to proclaim that, whatever modern science may seem to say, God is, God is one, and God is good. Very many who have never yielded any kind of allegiance to the Christian faith must have been impressed, in a sense even "saved," by the sight of men and women, educated like themselves in the science and philosophy of the day, yet refusing to believe that the world of the bodily life is the real world, living in the spirit and power of the eternal, so convinced that Jesus Christ is the truth of things that for his sake they turn a deaf ear to all lesser claims.

### 7. The Gradual Christianization of the Non-Christian Religions.

The fact that in countries where idolatry is practised, many now so often deny that the idol is worshipped, is only one example of a common tendency that points to the profound impression Christian teaching has made wherever it is heard. It is more or less tacitly accepted everywhere as the ideal, alike in thought and in practice. Hindu apologetic to-day largely takes the form of showing that there is no essential difference between Christianity and Hinduism. That is perhaps not quite so true to-day as it was twenty years ago. Since then Mrs. Besant has shown the Hindus how to rationalize and spiritualize beliefs which they themselves were giving up as unworthy of educated men; on the other hand, the movement for political independence has been closely associated with a renaissance of all things Indian, including Indian religions. These are probably temporary phenomena. It remains true that Hindus, while having difficulty about Christian metaphysic, have for all practical purposes, with a unanimity which is a testimony to their open-mindedness and spiritual responsiveness, acknowledged the compelling power of Jesus and the worth of Christian ethic.

If it is not quite true to say that the same statement holds good of all other religions, namely that their apologetes are eager to show how closely they approximate to Christianity, we may perhaps say with some confidence that Christianity is the one religion against which they seriously measure themselves and that their attitude to Christianity is now that of defence. Various non-Christian religions are paying Christianity the high compliment of the imitation of her beliefs, her ethics, and her methods. While Buddhism and espe-

cially Hinduism are perhaps the religions that have most closely adopted Christian methods such as zenana work, orphanages, young men's religious associations, and the distribution of literature, some of the most interesting developments on the lines of Christian thought have taken place in Mohammedanism.

Professor Stewart Crawford of the Syrian Protestant College at Beirut once wrote[1] "[Another] feature of present-day Islam that indicates the presence of a vital religious energy is the progressive idealization of the Prophet's personality by his followers. The clearest evidence of this is seen in the *maulid* form of service. The maulid is strictly the anniversary of the Prophet's birthday, and is everywhere an occasion for joyful celebration. The term has also come to be employed as a name for a certain form of service. . . . At these services the hymns chanted by paid leaders and choirs are the principal feature. . . . The subject of these hymns is invariably the birth of the Prophet with a recitation of the significance for heaven and earth of that sublime event. . . . [The maulid poets] have even advanced to a mystical philosophy of the Prophet's cosmic significance, in which his pre-existence is practically assumed, and the supreme influence of his intercessory function is set forth with all the florid wealth of Oriental imagery. . . . Toward the close of the ceremony . . . [the Prophet] is saluted with enthusiastic expressions of personal loyalty and devotion. . . . The philosophical conceptions from which a practical deification has resulted have undoubtedly had their origin in the intellectual activity of educated converts from Christianity."

[1] *International Review of Missions*, October, 1912.

**8. Christianity Truly a World Religion.**

In all this we do not for a moment forget the contribution made by other religions to the civilizing and uplifting of mankind, the humanitarian ideals of Buddhism, for example, or the fight waged by Mohammedanism in the Soudan against alcohol, cannibalism, and blood revenge. When due allowance is made for all this, we have reached the stage when, of the religions known to us, it is hardly conceivable that any but Christianity could ever become a religion for mankind. Perhaps the educated Hindu would be hardly less aghast than the rest of mankind if the suggestion were ever seriously made that the world become Hindu; certainly, this seems to have no place among Hindu ideals to-day. Buddhism, as a kindly ethic and as a philosophy, has shown wonderful vitality in some parts of Asia; of its capacity to become a world religion, we have yet to see the first sign. Mohammedanism and the religions of China and Japan, when indeed they are religions at all, seem to have an influence that is essentially limited to certain regions of the earth's surface.

It is true that in some spheres of effort, especially among Mohammedans (with the notable exception of those of the Dutch East Indies), and among the Brahmins of India, at least in the last generation, after the comparatively short time during which missionary work has been conducted, Christianity has few results to show of the kind of which statisticians can take note. Yet practically everywhere else, the Christian Gospel, preached and lived among peoples of all creeds, classes, colors, kinds of character, and states of civilization, has made an impression so profound, and won triumphs so notable, that it has more than made good its claim to be a religion such as may one day bind all men in a common brotherhood.

# XIII

## THE INDEBTEDNESS OF WESTERN CHRISTIANITY TO MISSIONS

We have been accustomed to think of the relation of the Western churches to the mission churches as that of giver to receiver. In so far as the description is correct, there is all the more reason why we must strenuously protest against every attempt to base the missionary cause on interested motives. Let there be one piece of unselfish work which the West does for the rest of the world. But it would not be in accordance with the nature of things that the giving should be all on one side. The feeling that we go to other nations to learn as well as to teach, whether it is as recent a development as we sometimes think or not, is at least more conscious and more vocal than formerly.

### 1. World Evangelism the Discharge of a Debt.

Stewart of Lovedale waxed eloquent against those who used the word "sacrifice" in speaking of the things that missionaries give up and the hardships they often endure. Some of those who have entered most deeply into the Christian spirit would go further and deny that the bearer of the "good news" goes to the non-Christian world in the character of a voluntary giver. Paul regarded his mission as the simple discharge of an obligation: "I am debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish" (Romans 1 : 14). In modern times, M. Berthoud chose an African field for his missionary labors, because of his sense of the obligation resting upon Christians to atone to Africa

for the wrongs of slavery. The utmost we can do for that dark and sorrowing land is but a poor compensation for the cruelties we have inflicted on her. Of these cruelties, slavery is perhaps the chief, and it has the unhappy distinction of having been practised for a time under the benediction of the church. Doctor Robinson tells us that "a large number of the slaves shipped abroad from West Africa were taken from the Congo districts, and a marble chair formerly existed on the pier at St. Paul de Loanda from which the bishops used to give their blessing to the slave ships which were preparing to sail for the Portuguese possessions in Brazil or the West Indies." [1]

Doctor Schweitzer, too, in the impassioned words of one who has known at first hand the sufferings and the wrongs of Africa, and has looked on them with eyes that had caught the pity of Jesus, has thus expressed his conviction: "If a record could be compiled of all that has happened between the white and the colored races, it would make a book containing numbers of pages, referring to recent as well as to early times, which the reader would have to turn over unread, because their contents would be too horrible." [2] Anything, he says, that we give Africa is not benevolence but atonement; and, with all that we can do, we can never atone for more than a thousandth part of our guilt.

### 2. The Salutary Reflex Influence of Missions on the Missionary.

Even, however, if we grant that we engage in the work of spreading the Gospel as unconstrained volunteers, it is as true here as elsewhere that it is more

[1] *History of Christian Missions*, p. 301.
[2] *On the Edge of the Primeval Forest*, p. 172.

blessed to give than to receive. There is a reflex influence in all unselfish activities that brings blessing to him that gives as well as to him that takes. Lord Milner called Stewart of Lovedale "the biggest human in South Africa." Doctor Denney called Doctor Laws of Livingstonia "the biggest human he had ever met." Carey, the village cobbler, who left school at twelve and knew nothing of college life, and who yet became a professor in the government college in Calcutta and one of the greatest missionaries of all time, whose linguistic achievements, even after the lapse of a century, leave us breathless with astonishment, all the more so as they were only one department of the activities of that marvellous pioneer, is only an extreme example of a common phenomenon. Among those who have any intimate acquaintance with the activities of the church in other lands, there must be many who regard some missionary as among the finest specimens they know of manhood or of womanhood.

Men like David Livingstone, Robert Morrison, Carey of Serampore, Miller of Madras, and Chalmers of New Guinea, and women like Mary Slessor of Calabar, were no doubt people of uncommon mental and spiritual stature to begin with. Yet it would be a mistake to think that such people would necessarily have been the giants they were had they stayed at home. Where one successfully resists the benumbing influence of an environment of spiritual deadness and moral degradation, such as is the lot of many missionaries, the missionary atmosphere makes for growth. Many pioneers of Christianity, like most white men working among colored races, are bearing a far heavier load of responsibility than they would among their own people; it is astonishing how often men rise to their responsibilities.

As Sir H. H. Johnston said: "When the history of

the great African states of the future comes to be written, the arrival of the first missionaries will, with many of these new nations, be the first historical event in their annals." The consciousness of taking a part of some importance in an epoch-making movement, the difficult and delicate problems that one is so often called on to solve, the scope that one finds for whatever of talent in almost any direction one may possess, all tend to draw out from one the very best of which one is capable. As has been said, it is the strain that brings the strength.

### 3. The Salutary Reflex Influence of Missions on the Church.

Nor is this reflex action of missionary activity confined to the missionary; it extends to the whole church in so far as she takes part in the work. Dealing with one of the favorite criticisms of missions, that "charity begins at home" and that there are jungles to clear and morasses to drain in our own country, the Right Honorable Winston Churchill replied that "nothing is more important to this material age than to cultivate and develop the element of disinterested labor and work on the part of individuals and classes. . . . No great benefit will be gained, no lasting treasure will be secured by any purely self-centred movement, however grave be the need which prompts it, however harsh may be the conditions which envelop it. . . . The democracy must not be self-centred."

### 4. Missions as a Field for the Spiritual Energy and Capacity of Women.

Probably few churches realize the extent to which the foreign enterprise has provided a field—might we not by a different and perhaps more appropriate metaphor

call it a safety-valve?—for the capacity and the spiritual energies of their women. One of the grave charges we make against Mohammedanism and Hinduism is that, by keeping their women-folk in ignorance and largely in seclusion, they have in great measure deprived whole nations of the fruit of the consecrated talents of a whole sex. In Christian countries we do not now keep our women either in ignorance or in seclusion; we permit and even sometimes encourage them to make their contribution to the welfare of the state. Yet the Christian church, almost with one accord, has shut out its women from the positions of greatest social and spiritual influence in the greatest organization for the welfare of mankind that the world has ever known, the Christian church. The foreign enterprise of the church is almost the only department of its activities in which women have been allowed freedom—even there within strict limitations—to develop the great gifts of mind and heart and even body that God has given so many of them. The history of Christian missions during the last half century has forever given its quietus to any lingering suspicion there may have been in the minds of the conservative, that the age-long policy of narrowly restricting the sphere for the exercise of the talents of Christian women had behind it some kind of divine sanction.

### 5. Missions as Illuminating the Bible.

The foreign work of the church, especially among primitive peoples, has done much to make the Bible for us a living book. The atmosphere of the mission field is far more akin to the atmosphere of the Bible, especially of the Old Testament, than that of the West. As the writer has expressed it elsewhere:[1] "India

[1] *Expository Times*, June, 1921.

is not Palestine, yet India and Palestine are both in the East. Take the panorama of life as it used to pass before one's door. A raucous, incessant cry for alms heralds the approach of a blind beggar. The driver of a passing bullock-cart is goading his animals beyond their strength as they stumble along beneath their yoke, toiling and heavy-laden. A leper approaches, perhaps a band of lepers clasping hands, with their loathsome sores and their pitiful cries for help. Tempted by the wares of an itinerant fruit-seller, you ask him their price, and he replies: 'What Sahib pleases.' On a cot in the near distance lies a 'holy man,' clothed principally in dust and ashes, superbly indifferent to the reverent gaze of the squatting group of admirers. A visitor enters with a graceful salaam and an exaggerated expression of joy and humility. The patter of feet in the distance and the sound of a mournful chant intimate the approach of a funeral procession, following the corpse, carried by bearers on an open bier. In the heat of the day a passing cartman tethers his beast to a tree and lies down to rest under its shade. A woman on the road takes a fit of some kind, and the bystanders explain that she is devil-possessed. In the evening a Mussulman, overtaken on the road by the close of day, spreads his praying-carpet on the ground and performs his devotions with face to the setting sun. Might not the picture, in many of its details, have walked out of the Bible?"

### 6. The Meaning of Names.

As an illustration of the light that the missionary study of primitive peoples sheds on the Bible, take the subject of names. Every reader of the Bible is aware of the significance attached in it to names, of the importance of finding the right name, not only for God

but for human beings, and of the habit of changing the name in accordance with some striking experience through which the person has passed. People, too, have wondered what precisely is meant by the prohibition against taking God's name "in vain."

Perhaps the answer to the last question is found in Warneck's account of the beliefs of the animists of the Indian Archipelago. A man's name, he tells us, is closely connected with his soul; his name is therefore holy, and should not be uttered unless there is some real necessity. It is the work of the magic priests to find a name for a person that will be adequate for his soul. When a man is sick, that may indicate that his soul has left him, and his name is sometimes changed in the hope that the soul, attracted by the name, will return to the body. Missionaries in other parts of the world are familiar with similar ideas. Thus low-caste Hindus will give their children such names as "Rat," "Rag," "Two Cowries" (worth a fraction of a cent) in the hope that evil spirits, repelled by such names, will leave their children alone.

### 7. The Moral Problems of a Christian Community.

The practical moral problems that arise in the young churches of to-day have a striking similarity to those that arose in the very beginning of the Christian enterprise. Paul was shocked because the Christians of Corinth, when they had disputes with each other, followed the Greek practice of taking them to the civil (heathen) courts, instead of the Jewish practice of using the religious courts to settle even civil disputes.[1] Though the Indians are a highly litigious people, in twenty years' experience one never knew a dispute

[1] I Corinthians, 6: 1–8.

among Indian Christians being carried to the civil courts.

The question what is the Christian line of action when husband or wife becomes Christian and the other partner does not, troubled the Corinthian church as it vexes many a young church to-day. Paul's method of dealing with the question,[1] while it may have to be supplemented in certain fields to-day, in the broad principles he lays down leaves little to be said. It is in accordance with his Christian feeling and practical good sense that he ruled out, apparently did not even consider, any solution that would ignore a marriage celebrated in all good faith under "heathen" auspices. However great our difficulties may be, that is never the way out.

Much of the meat used in Corinth in Paul's day had been previously offered in sacrifice to some god, though the offering might be quite formal, only a few hairs of the animal being actually destroyed in the sacrifice. Apparently also it was common to hold the feasts of the trade guilds and private dinner parties in a "heathen" temple, the god being the nominal host. The question whether Christians might eat such meat or attend such feasts, a question which Paul discussed with such Christian sagacity and insight,[2] is typical of the moral problems that arise wherever Christianity for the first times comes into contact with a life saturated with heathenism. Where idolatry exists, it permeates the life from waking to sleeping and from the cradle to the grave. The emphasis laid in the New Testament on hospitality as a Christian virtue is an echo of the days when Christians frequently travelled on business, and when they would be faced with moral temptations and dangers and with difficult questions

[1] I Corinthians 7: 12–14.

[2] I Corinthians 8; 10: 14–33.

about food, if they stayed in the public inns and serais. Hospitality to travelling Christians is one of the leading virtues of Indian Christians, partly because in a caste-ridden country it is usually impossible for Christians to eat with Hindus.

The early conflict with polytheism provided the Christians with abundant tests alike of their moral fibre and their dialectical skill. Could a Christian be an actor or even attend the theatre, when theatrical exhibitions depended so much on idolatry? Could a Christian accept an invitation to a friend's wedding or coming-of-age ceremony, if the invitation distinctly stated that it was for the purpose of assisting at a sacrifice? (Invitations to similar functions among the Hindus to-day are issued under the ægis of some god). If a man knew no other occupation than idol-making, could he as a Christian continue to make idols? Could a Christian worker in gold leaf use his skill to repair a damaged idol? Could a Christian sell frankincense, so much used in sacrifices, or hold a civil appointment necessitating participation in sacrifices or theatrical shows, or be a military officer, which might involve him in offering sacrifices or in condemning a fellow-creature to capital punishment?

Then, as in our day with regard to similar questions, there was a lax party as well as a strict party in the church. Then, as now, the lax party could quote Scripture as well as the strict party. Elijah was the charioteer of Israel; David danced before the ark; Moses had a serpent manufactured in the wilderness; Joseph and Daniel held civil appointments, and the New Testament had its warriors as well as the Old.[1]

Those who in our day would allow a polygamous convert to retain his relations with his various wives

[1] Harnack, *Expansion of Christianity*. Book II, chap. VII.

while a member of the church, rely on the fact that, according to the practice of his time and his country all his marriages were legal, and that great hardship would be involved if all the wives but one were put away. The economic hardship at least is greatly exaggerated, as the husband may be, and should be, expected to fulfil the obligations he has undertaken whether he is recognized as a church member or not. It is to the credit of the "broad" party on this point that they do not justify their attitude by a reference to the regular and irregular marriage relationships of the Old Testament "saints," but confine their Scriptural arguments to an extraordinary exegesis of I Timothy 3 : 2.

In the case of the Jalna Christians already referred to, those who advocated the continuance of the drum-beating even by Christians took the ground of the "broad" Corinthians of Paul's time that an idol is nothing, so that beating the drum before an idol is no more harmful than beating it before any other piece of wood or stone.

One of the great difficulties of the young churches in a non-Christian environment is that of securing for the Christians the opportunity of the Sunday rest and the Sunday worship. The question is not one of blind observance of an ancient and half-understood ordinance. In a young Christian community it is even more important than it is in the West, where Christian traditions are more firmly established, that the people should have the stimulus of the fellowship and the worship of the Sunday service, and the moral guidance of the preaching, often practically the only guidance they receive. So sane a judge as Doctor Gibson of Swatow gave it as his verdict that, even in cases where it might seem to savor of harshness, as when the work of a

Christian was to ferry passengers across a river, insistence on the Sunday rest and worship justified itself by the results in the life of the church.

### 8. Human Degeneracy.

As an illustration of the way in which missionary experience may shed light on Christian dogma, let us take the much-discussed subject of the Fall. We are often told that, in the light of the teaching of modern science, we should no longer speak of the Fall of man, but rather of his gradual Ascent from a lowly origin. If Christian teaching on the Fall is supposed to imply that man once lived in a state of moral purity, and that then, through one man at a definite moment in history yielding to some particular temptation, the whole race permanently sank to a lower level, there is not much to be said for it. But only those who completely misunderstand the Hebrew way of writing history or philosophy could take such a meaning out of the Genesis story.

The truth of the Fall lies rather in the "downward pull" in the moral life, alike of the individual and of the race. That there is such a downward pull in each life, we are all painfully aware; its classical expression we find in the seventh chapter of Romans. But it is no less true of the moral and religious life of nations and of races. As has been said, the history of the non-Christian religions is the history of their decline.

Thousands of years ago, the people of India had a far purer religion, a religion far more in accordance with the truth of things, than they have to-day. Partly under the influence of the aboriginal religions which the Aryans found in India when they entered it, partly under the natural tendency of the human mind to stress ritual rather than life, Hinduism has become a

round of meaningless ceremonies; combined with the stereotyping of beliefs and customs which, whatever truth or wisdom they once possessed, now result in endless cruelty and the strangling of the national life. The same is true in large measure of Buddhism and Mohammedanism. Warneck has the same story to tell of the Battaks of the Indian Archipelago. Their language, traditions, and beliefs, all give evidence of a relatively loftier state from which they have fallen. Not only have they failed to keep up to the standard of their own ancestors; they have dragged down to their own level both Hinduism and Mohammedanism in so far as these have influenced them. The tradition among so many peoples of a Golden Age in the distant past is not altogether a myth.

**9. Light on New Testament Christian Experience.**

One would naturally expect to find Oriental types of Christian experience approximating to those of the New Testament. No Indian Christian of recent times has attracted so much attention outside of India as Sadhu Sundar Singh, something of whose spiritual history has recently been told by Canon Streeter. He was born in the state of Patiala, in northern India, and was brought up in luxury by his wealthy parents. His mother was a pious Sikh, who constantly urged her boy to live that life of "saintship" which is so reverenced in India. He read his sacred books, but none of them brought him that peace of mind that his mother taught him to long for. He used to persecute the Christian preachers that came to his town, and once he cut up a Bible, put coal oil on it and burned it. In his vain striving after religious peace, he thought of giving it all up and committing suicide. He awoke at three o'clock one morning, had his bath and prayed:

"O God, if there is a God, wilt thou show me the the right way, or I will kill myself?"

He prayed for an hour. Then the room seemed to be on fire and in the light he saw the form of the Lord Jesus Christ, an appearance of glory and love. A voice said to him in Hindustani: "How long will you persecute me? I have come to save you. You were praying to know the right way; why do you not take it?" From that moment the Sadhu lived the life of a modern apostle. He gave up his beautiful home; rather, he was driven from it, because he would not abjure his new Saviour. The Indian dearly loves the Sadhu, the wandering saint who gives up the comforts and joys of home, and wanders through the land in search of peace. Sundar Singh believed he was called of God to be a Christian Sadhu. After years of experience, hardship, and persecution, he went on a series of tours through large parts of the world, carrying only his yellow robe, his blanket, and his Bible.

### 10. Christianity as the Fulfilment of Other Religions.

A much-discussed question of missionary policy is that of the Christian attitude to the non-Christian religions. Are we to denounce and try to destroy them; or are we rather to regard ourselves as builders, who in Christian teaching are supplying an edifice for the foundations already existing in the world religions? Here again modern experience helps to light up the records of the first Christian generations. The most elaborate example of an attempt to expound scientifically what may be called the broader view is Doctor Farquhar's *Crown of Hinduism*, in which he takes one by one the social and religious ideals of Hinduism, and seeks to show that the reality to which each points is found in Christianity. This book is informed by a

spirit so fine, provides such a mass of material, much of it the results of the author's own researches, and altogether makes such an admirable introduction to the study of the Hindu life of to-day, that the question whether it proves that Christianity is indeed the crown of Hinduism becomes of secondary importance.

It is true that Jesus said: "I am not come to destroy the Law or the prophets, but to fulfil" (Matthew 5 : 17). This statement, however, must be taken in the large sense in which all the words of Jesus must be taken if we are to understand them. While Jesus was the fulfilment of every worthy ideal of the Jewish law, he did, in fact, destroy forever very much of that law, including all its ritual requirements, especially animal sacrifice, and much that might have been classed under moral obligations. He destroyed it, not by any direct polemic, but by distinguishing between the ritual and the moral, the unimportant and the essential, the temporary and the permanent; and especially by summing up the whole legal system in the law which was no longer a law in the old sense, love to God and love to man.

It was from the beginning an element in Christian preaching to the Jews that Jesus was the Jews' Messiah; and the Christians soon learned to regard themselves as the true Israel, the real inheritors of the promises. There was even, as we have seen, a party among the Christians that believed that Christians were just Jews who believed that Jesus was the Messiah. If this had been the whole story, then it would have been the simple truth that Christianity was the fulfilment of Judaism. But a sharp controversy arose round this very point; and, fortunately for the history of our religion, the party that triumphed saw in Christianity something bigger than the Jewish Law plus Jesus.

As for the mission to the Gentiles, when Paul was in Athens and saw the altar with the inscription "To the Unknown God," he said to the Athenians: "What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this set forth I unto you" (Acts 17:23). Here again it may be claimed that, in God revealed in Christ, Paul offers the Athenians the reality of which they had caught a dim foreshadowing. Yet surely in his epistles Paul is far more anxious to show the contrast between the Christian religion and the world religions than any resemblance between them, real or fancied.

Similarly we may try to show that the family and social ideals, the ascetic discipline, the theory of incarnations, the use of images in worship, the theory of karma and transmigration (lot in each life being retribution for conduct in the previous life) in Hinduism or in any other religion, point forward to essential truths of the Christian Gospel. But the connection between the reality (often the ugly reality) and the ideal is often so far from obvious, the explanation has to be hedged round with limitations so serious, that we may fairly doubt whether we are making things easier for ourselves or for those to whom we speak by this method of approach. If the "fulfilment" theory means that God has never and nowhere left himself without a witness, that wherever we go we find some foundation of truth on which to build, and that politeness and sympathetic appeal are more effective than irritating and insulting denunciation, it will have behind it all reasonable people. If it means more than that, the value of this conception of missionary method is much more questionable.

### 11. The Many-sidedness of Christianity.

A feature of the New Testament which is clear to

every careful reader is that the needs which the Christ satisfied were very varied, and that in accordance with their divergent experiences people saw Jesus at various angles. If we are not conscious of a very distinct difference in outlook as we pass from Mark to Matthew and Luke and from these to John, it is only because we bring to all our Scripture reading a composite picture drawn from all our reading of the New Testament and from many other sources. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews does not see in Jesus quite what Paul saw in him, and James has yet another viewpoint.

The many-sidedness of the Gospel is revealed to us with ever new impressiveness as it makes its way from country to country and from continent to continent. We have become so accustomed to the story of the triumphs of the Gospel that we hardly realize the severity of the test to which in the last century it has been put. Never before has the vast and varied world of humanity been so accessible. Within the short space of a century, representatives of all kinds of religions from the lofty speculations of intellectual and spiritual giants to the loathsome beliefs and practices of the ignorant and brutal animist, peoples of all stages of civilization from the cultured classes of India and China to the savage and the cannibal, have had the Gospel preached to them and lived before them. One of the great debts we owe to the young churches is the new confidence we have in our faith as we see Indian Brahmins, educated Japanese, Chinese Buddhists, Indian sweepers, African cannibals, and savages from New Guinea sitting down at the table of our Lord, drawing from him the inspiration for their daily lives. They have one Lord, one faith, one baptism; but they come to their common Lord by widely different paths, and their indebtedness to him covers the satisfaction

of the whole range of human needs, from the longing of the saint to be more saintly to the inarticulate cry of him who has sunk so low that he cannot picture what a human life would be.

To any but the strongest Christian faith, the work which the church undertook in some parts of the world would have seemed beyond the power of God himself; there were those who did say the task was impossible. There are parts of the world where even to read of the conditions as the missionaries first met them, leaves one with a despairing sense of wonder how, in a world made by God, nature and man could combine to be so cruel. Yet in many cases these are the very places where the gospel has won its greatest triumphs. The impossible has become the actual; and the people who almost made one despair of a divine governance in the world are among those who most strengthen our faith that we are all God's children, that in Jesus Christ God himself is revealed to us, and that our hearts know no rest till they find it in him. Speaking of his fondness for placing side by side a heathen and a Christian Fuegian, Darwin wrote in his *Journal of Researches:*[1] "It was without exception the most curious and interesting spectacle I ever beheld. I could not have believed how wide was the difference between savage and civilized man. It seems yet wonderful to me when I think over all his [a Fuegian convert's] many good qualities, that he should have been of the same race, and doubtless have partaken of the same character, with the miserable, degraded savages whom we first met here. Viewing such men, one can hardly make oneself believe that they are fellow creatures and inhabitants of the same world. The success of the mission is most wonderful, and charms me, as I always prophesied

[1] Quoted in *Stewart of Lovedale,* by James Wells, p. 253.

utter failure. I could not have believed that all the missionaries in the world could have made the Fuegians honest. The mission is a grand success. . . . The march of improvement consequent on the introduction of Christianity throughout the South Seas probably stands by itself in the record of history."

### 12. The Contrast Between Modern and New Testament Missionary Activity.

If there is a striking parallelism between the missionary endeavor of to-day and that described in the New Testament, each shedding light on the other, in some respects there is a hardly less striking contrast. Modern missionaries have usually gone out as representatives of a race that believed itself to be superior, the belief usually, until quite lately, being shared to the full by those they sought to evangelize. They took with them not only religious teaching, but what they believed to be a higher civilization, what in many cases undoubtedly was a higher civilization. It was not only the Christian bringing his religion to the non-Christian, but the white man bringing his culture to the black, the brown, and the yellow man. In nearly all parts of the world, too, there is a language problem to be solved somehow before the missionary can get on to common terms with those he seeks to influence.

In the first Christian generations all that was different. At Lystra the people were superstitious enough to imagine that Paul and Barnabas were gods come down in human form; but, speaking generally, and especially when they crossed into Greece and Italy, the first Christian missionaries could not seem, either to themselves or to their hearers, to be the bearers of a higher civilization. The Jew was certainly proud of his religion; but, however much he might despise the Gen-

tile in spiritual things, when the Gentiles were Greeks or Romans the Jewish Christian must have been very conscious that he had no ground for boasting, either in his culture or in his color, nor had the Jews ever been an imperial race, while now they were a subject race.

The reason why we read of Paul and other missionaries passing from country to country and being able to preach at once to the people without learning their language was that Greek was then spoken and written all over the Roman Empire. The letters and business documents of that period, which to-day are being dug out of the sands of Egypt, even when they come from the pens of almost uneducated farmers and tradesmen, are written in Greek. Another striking difference between the evangelist's conception of his work then and now is that, whereas the modern missionary fights the battle of the slave, the Indian pariah, and all who are being deprived of the elementary rights of manhood, Paul and his colleagues engaged in no such crusade, even against slavery. That may have been due in part to the fact that they shared the common view that slavery was a necessary institution of society, just as until quite lately in the West most people believed that the illiteracy, the poverty, and the social and political subjection of the great mass of the people were among the decrees of Providence. In part also it was doubtless due to the general expectation in the church, so clear in some of Paul's letters, that the Christ would speedily return, so that all matters of social reform were comparatively unimportant.

The reflection that the first missionaries accomplished the marvels that they did, without those adventitious aids that have given the modern missionary so much of his prestige, should give us a better sense of proportion

in appraising the work of our own day. Bishop Thoburn is reported to have brought forward, as an evidence of the power of Christianity, that, while Washington had six thousand models of plows invented by Americans, India was using the same plow as in the days of David and Solomon. It is necessary to use extreme care in associating religion with mechanical and industrial progress. Mr. Gandhi is not the only man of to-day who is sceptical of the value of this whole conception of progress. It is well in a quiet moment to ponder the material conditions amid which our Lord did his work. Jesus had no means of locomotion but his feet, a rowboat or sailing boat, and, in his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, an ass. The only food of which we read of his partaking was bread and fish. He was often tired and hungry. He left, so far as we know, not a scrap of writing. Directly at least, he did nothing to advance science. We can hardly conceive of him inventing anything, or wanting to invent anything. He steadfastly refused to take any part in the political game. That he should increase the wealth of himself or of any one else was the very last of his thoughts. With all this, Jesus is the greatest spiritual force in the world to-day.

### 13. Christianity as a Way of Life.

It is not suggested that all who have gone to other lands in the name of the Christ have a fully intelligent conception of what they are trying to do. One has read of a lady missionary who boasted that the girls in her boarding-school had an accurate knowledge of all the visions of Ezekiel, and of another who reported that her Bible course for the year had been the history of the world till the time of Abraham. But, speaking generally, in the presence of the clamant needs of the

great non-Christian world, our missionary representatives have been compelled to concentrate on the essential things; they have realized that Christianity is not primarily a creed, nor a scheme of social reform, much less of industrial regeneration, but a way of life. They have learned to give central importance to that life which is the source of our life. The difference on this point, in practice at least, between Christianity and some of the world religions is well illustrated by a story Doctor Farquhar tells. In Mysore, where Christian baptism still deprives a man of his property, there were two brothers. One, a man of high character, became a Christian. The other, an orthodox Hindu, was in prison for some crime. In strict accordance with Hindu principle, the brother, whose only offence was that he had the courage of his religious convictions, was disinherited, and his property went to the Hindu criminal.

**14. It Justifies Supreme Sacrifices.**

Our experience in the non-Christian world convinces us, not only that Christianity is a way of life, but that, in the judgment of those who see life's values most truly, this way of life is life's supreme good, to win which the sacrifice of all else is not too great a price. Wherever the Christian Gospel goes, we find men and women to whom it is still true that the pearl of great price is ample compensation for the loss of all other pearls, that the treasure hid in the field is worthy that to win it one should sell all that he has.

Sometimes in the comfortable life of Western Christianity, which has succeeded so well in adjusting itself to its environment, we wonder whether our religion no longer calls for costly sacrifice. We have enough actual illustrations of the fact to make us sure that when the

"Sell all that thou hast" comes to us unambiguously, there will be a wide response to-day, as in the days of old. Yet the doubt insinuates itself, whether the call would not come oftener to us if we had a readier ear for it. To take one single illustration: We hear a good deal to-day about the art of salesmanship. To the uninitiated, the art of salesmanship seems to consist largely in inducing people to buy things they neither need nor want and cannot afford. Is there no challenge here to Christian feeling, as there was in earlier days, when Christians were tempted to occupations and amusements that involved the condoning of idolatry?

However this may be, on the frontiers of Christianity where our religion is breaking new ground, there are always men and women with the reckless abandon of the first followers of Jesus. The Indian clergyman whom the writer knew best was an educated Brahmin convert who, at his baptism, gave up a fortune. He kept open house, though all the time one knew him he never had a salary that reached thirty dollars a month. Though he belonged to the oldest and proudest aristocracy in the world, he found his chief associates among the waifs and strays of the community. Whatever it might cost him, he gave a literal adherence to the teaching of Jesus as he understood it, and lived a humble, consistent Christian life. It is in lives such as his that the Gospel proves its power wherever it goes. Whether it was by accident or design that the Acts of the Apostles was left unfinished, the record is still being written.

### 15. It Owes Much to the New Indigenous Churches.

In even more direct ways than these, we are becoming debtors to the young churches for a new insight into our faith. In a famous passage of his Bampton lectures,

Bishop Gore said: "Only all together, all ages, both sexes, can we grow up into one body, 'into the perfect man'; only a really catholic society can be 'the fulness of him that filleth all in all.' Thus we doubt not that, when the day comes which shall see the existence of really national churches in India and China and Japan, the tranquillity and inwardness of the Hindu, the pertinacity and patience of the Chinaman, the brightness and amiability of the Japanese, will each in turn receive their fresh consecration in Christ, and bring out new and unsuspected aspects of the Christian life; finding fresh resources in him in whom is 'neither Jew nor Greek, neither male nor female, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ all in all.'" In the nineteenth century the Christians of the Orient and of Africa were too much under the influence of their Western teachers to make their own contribution to the understanding of Jesus; but the age of pupilage is passing away. From the young churches we are relearning some of the things the age of machines and scientific discovery had tended to make us forget: the meaning, for example, of Christian patience and Christian forgiveness of those who wrong us. We are discovering afresh that a man's life does not consist in the superfluity of the things that he possesses, nor in the speed with which he makes things, nor in the rapidity with which he travels. Christians in the lands afar may teach us yet that our absorption in the things we see and touch is but a passing phase in the history of Christian thought; that what Jesus did for us he did in the spirit of the eternal; and that they who would come to God through Jesus must catch something of that spirit.

The Christians of western India, whose song service used to consist largely of weak translations of Western

hymns set to Western tunes, now never tire of singing the beautiful lyrics of that great Christian poet, the Reverend N. V. Tilak, who was by common consent of Hindu and Christian alike the poet laureate of western India; lyrics that tell of the fleeting nature of all earthly things, of the abiding rest that is in God and his unchanging love.

**16. It Is a Growing World Fellowship.**

Once again, the young churches are showing us, what we are paying so heavy a price for forgetting, that the church is a fellowship, a company of brothers and sisters with common aims, common affections, and common interests, with whom the welfare of each is the welfare of all and the shame of each is the shame of all. When the men of North America wish to get this sense of comradeship they join not the church, but the Kiwanis or the Rotary Clubs, the Masons or the Oddfellows.

Partly through the pressure of the hostile life around them, in the lands where the Christian fellowship is winning fresh triumphs, the followers of Jesus find their comradeship where they ought to find it, in the company of those who, by doing the will of God, become brothers and sisters of Jesus and of each other. Not till the church is a brotherhood will the church have the power of a brotherhood.

There are indications, too, that the young churches will help us to cross, not only the gulf of indifference that separates Christian and Christian, but the gulf of rivalry or even of hostility that separates one Christian communion from another. As the missionaries from non-Christian lands, taught by experience the pettiness of the divergences in dogma and ceremonial that rend the body of Christ, are in the forefront of movements for healing the breaches, so that we have almost

come to regard it as a safe test of any movement for reunion whether it has the foreign missionaries behind it, so the Christians of the young churches, in the joy of a great deliverance and the clear-eyed vision of their new enthusiasm, are demanding, and rightly demanding, that, whether we follow them or not, we shall not stand in their way, as they seek to bring all whose spiritual life is nurtured at the same source into a fellowship of worship.

# XIV

## WORLD-WIDE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

### 1. The Appeal of Christian Missions to the Student Life of Our Generation.

The idea of the Christian Gospel as a message, not for a sect or a race but for mankind, has made a peculiar appeal to the student life of our generation; and rightly so. The student mind resents the bird-cage conception, whether of life or of religion. If the joy of being a member of a world-wide fellowship is part of the attractive power of Christianity for the Oriental or the African, to eager, enthusiastic youth with its generous impulses, the joy of having some part in the establishment of that fellowship is sufficient reward for a life of what the world calls sacrifice. To the healthy-minded student, there is great satisfaction in leaving a sphere in which we compete for "posts" with others who could fill them as well as ourselves, and in going where work awaits us, work that can gratify every worthy aspiration. Every missionary, in his or her measure, is engaged in the great adventure of changing the orientation of a whole nation, in a work which, in many cases, by common consent is lifting the whole nation to a new level of aspiration and achievement.

It might be an exaggeration to say that there is no talent which cannot be effectively used in the foreign field; Schweitzer's interpretations of Bach would hardly be appreciated in the heart of Africa. This one can say: that there are few human endowments that cannot find abundant scope for exercise in the frontier work, and that many of them yield a far larger income of utility in foreign service than they would at home. The

fear that the student who decides to cast his lot among colored people is burying his talents indicates either an inordinate estimate of the value of these talents or a complete failure to realize the far-reaching significance of the work done by the missionary.

**2. The Remarkable Contributions Made by Women.**

The offers of actual service from students, and from a multitude of others who are not in the technical sense students, have sometimes, though by no means always, outrun the willingness of the church to equip and support them. Yet in the nature of the case, those who are actually engaged in the foreign enterprise of the church can never be more than a small delegation from her membership; and the effectiveness of this delegation is in large measure limited by the extent to which it has behind it the prayers, the intelligent, sympathetic interest, and the pecuniary contributions, not of a few who are "interested in missions," but of the church as a whole. When we discuss the time required for the evangelization of the world, we sometimes forget that, while we know something of what can be accomplished by small minorities of Christians, we have yet to learn what God might have in store for us if all who call themselves Christians had any real desire to see a Christian world and were prepared to pay the price.

For some time past, it seems safe to say that, in the home department of foreign missions, the men of the church have been outstripped, both in knowledge and in zeal, by the women. This may be due in a measure to the greater leisure enjoyed by many women, though most men seem to find time for those social and philanthropic activities which they deem important. In part it is the natural outcome of the receptiveness of women in the things of the spirit. But is it not to a

great degree attributable to the almost instinctive recognition by women of what the Gospel has done for them; to their imaginative power to picture what life must mean for women deprived of Christian inspiration; to their realization that, where Christian standards are absent, women are the first and the last to suffer? Many a woman whose horizon otherwise would have been the walls of her own home or the boundaries of her own parish, has been delivered from all pettiness of mind or spirit because, through her interest in Christian missions, she has learned to understand the ways and to fathom the mind of some alien people, has followed with deep and prayerful concern the fortunes of the Christian cause in some far distant part of the world.

### 3. The Unused Resources of Christian Men.

The missionary task is far beyond the resources of any section of the church, however eager. We have spoken all through as if the spreading of the Gospel were the special preserve of the "white" churches. This is very far indeed from being the case. Those which till lately we regarded as mission churches are themselves becoming missionary churches; and an inspiring story might be written of the way in which members of the young churches have proved that they inherit the true apostolic spirit, the spirit that counts the world well lost if brothers and sisters can be brought to know God in Jesus. We are, however, dealing primarily with the difficulties felt about missions in the older churches.

In her work abroad, the church will never approach the limit of her effectiveness till some knowledge of what has been accomplished, and a vastly deeper interest in the work, have become general among the Christian men of the West. Noble as has been the

part played by women in the past, women alone cannot meet the requirements of the case; nor can men discharge their obligations in full by gifts of money however generous. That, speaking generally, Christian men have never risen to the conception of the Gospel as a leaven for the thought and the life of mankind will hardly be denied. It may be that we have not made the right kind of appeal; and there is something in the consideration that we have become so accustomed to the achievements of the Gospel in our own environment that we hardly stop to ask ourselves what life would be like without it. In many cases, too, this failure to grasp what Christianity has meant historically is redeemed by no intense personal experience of religion such as leaves an abiding sense of indebtedness.

### 4. The Ideal Christian Fellowship.

Perhaps, however, men are inclined to be repelled by the flavor of a too conscious piety and churchliness which, let us hope without sufficient justification, they are apt to associate with enthusiasm for a missionary propaganda. For any who feel like that, one would recommend a study of the Epistle to the Ephesians. The church, as the author understands it, is no self-conscious body of superior persons who assemble to thank God for their goodness and groan over the sins of the outsiders. It is a living fellowship, with Christ as its head, the organ of the Christ through which he moulds mankind to his will.

Seen in the light of the Epistle to the Ephesians, the work of leading men to God through Jesus is no eccentric undertaking of a sectarian proselytism. In that epistle, Christ is "Our Peace," the reconciler. The apostle had in view a very definite gulf that had to be bridged. When the epistle was written, the sections

of the Temple at Jerusalem reserved for Jews were separated from the court which Gentiles might enter by a stone wall on which were pillars with the inscription: "No man of another nation to enter within the fence and enclosure round the temple. And whoever is caught will have himself to blame that his death ensues." [1] To the Jews who composed that inscription, the temple of the living God had itself become the very symbol of the barrier that separated Gentile from Jew, a barrier which it was death to cross. In drawing that dividing line and defending it with the death penalty, the Jews believed they were fulfilling the will of God.

That line was only one line of demarcation behind which the men of those days entrenched themselves in an isolation hostile to their fellow men. Hardly less impassable was the barrier that separated those who spoke Greek from the barbarians who knew no Greek, the freeman from the slave, the Roman citizen from him who had not yet won this proud privilege. The apostle thinks of the death of Jesus on the cross as marking the end of the reign of the Jewish law, and therefore as flinging down the hostile wall that separated Jew and Gentile. We think rather of the whole ministry of Jesus as showing the folly and the irreligion, not only of the cleavage between Jew and Gentile, but of all the walls within which men sought to enclose themselves from their neighbors. All exclusive classifications were in effect denials of the brotherhood of men.

### 5. The Family of God Knows no Barriers of Color, Race, Status, or Sect.

The self-contained communities of our day are enclosed within barriers as formidable and repellent as

[1] Translation by J. Armitage Robinson.

were those of the days of the Epistle to the Ephesians. Our bars of color, race, education, birth, and social status, our religious and sectarian bars, are still "hostile, dividing walls." All kinds of schemes have been proposed for establishing the community of the human race; but most of them fail just at the vital point. At the back of our minds there are always such questions as these: "Why should my maid-servant's welfare mean as much to me as my daughter's? Why should I care for my employer's interests as diligently as for my own? Why am I to think of the black man's humanity first, and of his blackness only when the claims of his humanity have been met? If the Chinaman or the Japanese wants to settle in my country, why must I study his point of view as faithfully as my own?"

To all of these questions, we know of no answer, except the religious answer, that which is given in this epistle. Not only is God the Father of men, but the very conception of a family is based on the family of God. To grasp this idea is to see the world task in all its breadth and fulness. If we are all God's children, but some, whether through wilfulness or through ignorance, are out of the home, it is for us who know God in Jesus, especially in Jesus on his cross, to teach our brothers and our sisters to claim their inheritance. Forgetting the parable of the prodigal son, men have tried to reverse the true order of things. When the reconciliation of son to Father is complete, then, and not till then, the estrangement of brother from brother will find its end.

# APPENDIX

# I

## GENERAL REFERENCE LITERATURE

Much of the relevant literature is in the form of magazine articles, reports of missionaries and missionary societies, and reports of missionary conferences, and is not readily accessible to the average student.

The best general introduction to the subject is the study of missionary biography, especially the lives of the pioneers and leaders of the modern movement, such as John G. Paton of the New Hebrides, Morrison and Hart of China, Underwood of Korea, Carey of Serampore, Chalmers of New Guinea, Mackay of Uganda, Stewart of Lovedale, Laws of Livingstonia, and Mary Slessor of Calabar.

There is abundant material in the reports of the World Missionary Conferences held in Edinburgh (1910) and Washington (1925). Many valuable articles on the subjects discussed in this book will be found in the volumes of the "International Review of Missions," which also publishes in each (quarterly) number a classified list of recent books and magazine articles on missionary topics.

There should also be some general preliminary study of the world, from the missionary point of view, and of the world religions, as in the volumes of the "Mission Study Reference Library" and in Doctor R. E. Hume's "The World's Living Religions" (Scribners).

It would be well also to make a more detailed study of one or two religions; using, for example, for Animism, Joh. Warneck's "The Living Forces of the Gospel";

and for Hinduism, Farquhar's "Primer of Hinduism," Farquhar's "Crown of Hinduism," the volumes in the "Religious Quest of India" series, and some of the accounts of the Indian religious classics (such as the Bhagavad Gita) published by the Christian Literature Society for India.

## II

## REFERENCE LITERATURE FOR EACH CHAPTER

### Chapter I

Jas. L. Barton, "The Missionary and His Critics," ch. I; Robert E. Speer, "Missionary Principles and Practice," chs. I–III.

### Chapter II

Horton, "The Bible a Missionary Book"; Storr, "The Missionary Genius of the Bible"; "Matthew," "Mark," and "Luke" (Century Bible or Bible for Home and School); Bosworth, "Life and Teaching of Jesus," ch. IV; J. Hope Moulton, "Religions and Religion," pp. 124–146; J. H. Oldham, "The Missionary Motive" (Student Christian Movement), ch. I.

### Chapter III

Blunt, "The Acts" (Clarendon Bible); "Epistle to the Galatians" (Cambridge Bible for Schools, Century Bible, or Bible for Home and School); Articles on "Paul" and other relevant subjects in Hastings' "Dictionary of the Apostolic Church"; Kirsopp Lake, "Landmarks in the History of Early Christianity"; H. A. A. Kennedy, "Vital Forces in the Early Church"; Robert E. Speer, "Missionary Principles and Practice," chs. XXI, XXII; Burton, "Galatians," pp. lvii–lxv; Wilfrid Knox, "St. Paul and the Church of Jerusalem"; David Smith, "Life and Letters of

Saint Paul"; H. A. A. Kennedy, "The Missionary Motive" (Student Christian Movement), ch. III; J. B. Lightfoot, "Historical Essays," pp. 1–92; T. R. Glover, "The Conflict of Religions in the Early Roman Empire."

### Chapter IV

Harnack, "Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries"; Robinson, "History of Christian Missions"; George Smith, "Short History of Christian Missions"; Articles on Missions in "Encyclopædia Britannica" and in Hastings' "Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics"; Articles on History of Missions in "Encyclopædia of Missions," by Dwight, Tupper, and Bliss; Welsh, "Challenge to Christian Missions," ch. IX; Bliss, "The Missionary Enterprise in the History of the Churches," Part I; Campbell N. Moody, "The Mind of the Early Converts"; Robert E. Speer, "Missions and Modern History."

### Chapter V

Welsh, "Challenge to Christian Missions," chs. III–VI; Joh. Warneck, "The Living Forces of the Gospel"; Godfrey E. Phillips, "The Outcastes' Hope"; Robert E. Speer, "Christianity and the Nations," ch. V; James A. Barton, "The Unfinished Task of the Christian Church," ch. V; Robert E. Speer, "Missionary Principles and Practice," p. 109; Mackintosh, "The Originality of the Christian Message."

### Chapter VI

Welsh, "Challenge to Christian Missions," ch. V; Lawrence, "Introduction to the Study of Foreign Missions," ch. V; Robert E. Speer, "Christianity and the Nations," ch. I; Arthur J. Brown, "New Forces

in Old China," ch. XXII; Dennis, "Christian Missions and Social Progress," vol. II, Lecture V; "Edinburgh, 1910," vol. II, ch. VI; C. E. Tyndale Biscoe, "Character Building in Kashmir"; Missionary Biographies.

### Chapter VII

W. N. Clarke, "A Study of Christian Missions," chs. I and III; Welsh, "Challenge to Christian Missions," ch. X; Lawrence, "Introduction to the Study of Foreign Missions," chs. II and III; James A. Barton, "The Unfinished Task of the Christian Church," ch. I; Robert E. Speer, "Missionary Principles and Practice," ch. IV; Robert E. Speer, "Christianity and the Nations," chs. II and III; James S. Dennis, "Christian Missions and Social Progress"; Annual Reports of the British and Foreign Bible Society; Annual Reports of the American Bible Society; Nicol MacNicol, "Tom Dobson."

### Chapter VIII

Arthur J. Brown, "New Forces in Old China"; Robert E. Speer, "Christianity and the Nations," chs. I and IV; W. N. Clarke, "A Study of Christian Missions," ch. II; Welsh, "Challenge to Christian Missions," chs. I and II; Lawrence, "Introduction to the Study of Foreign Missions," ch. II; Dennis, "Modern Call of Missions"; "The Missionary Motive," (Student Christian Movement), chs. III–VI.

### Chapter IX

Gibson, "Mission Problems and Mission Methods in South China"; Oldham, "Christianity and the Race Problem"; Hoyland, "The Race Problem and the Teaching of Jesus"; Maurice T. Price, "Missions

and Oriental Civilization"; Stoddard, "The Rising Tide of Color"; Hodgkin, "The Christian Revolution"; Robert E. Speer, "Christianity and the Nations," ch. IV.

### Chapter X

Moffatt, "Theology of the Gospels"; Denney, "Jesus and the Gospel," last chapter; Kennedy, "Theology of the Epistles"; Harnack, "What Is Christianity?"

### Chapter XI

Harnack, "Expansion of Christianity," book II; Warneck, "The Living Forces of the Gospel," section III; Nevius, "Demon Possession and Allied Themes"; Article on "Images and Idols" in Hastings' "Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics"; Dennis, "Christian Missions and Social Progress," Missionary Biographies; D. S. Cairns, "Christ in the Modern World"; Mrs. Creighton, "Missions"; H. T. Hodgkin, "The Missionary Motive," (Student Christian Movement), ch. VII.

### Chapter XII

Welsh, "Challenge to Christian Missions," chs. VII and VIII; Bliss, "The Missionary Enterprise in the History of the Church," part II; James A. Barton, "The Unfinished Task of the Christian Church," chs. VI and IX; James A. Barton, "The Missionary and His Critics," ch. X; Robert E. Speer, "Missionary Principles and Practice," part III; Dennis, "Christian Missions and Social Progress," Missionary Biographies; Schweitzer, "On the Edge of the Primeval Forest."

### Chapter XIII

Hall, "The Universal Elements in the Christian Religion"; W. N. Clarke, "A Study of Christian Missions," ch. VII; Welsh, "Challenge to Christian Missions," ch. XI; Lawrence, "Introduction to the Study of Foreign Missions," ch. V; James L. Barton, "The Missionary and His Critics," ch. II; Robert E. Speer, "Missionary Principles and Practice," Part IV; Clementina Butler, "Pandita Ramabai Saraswati"; Farquhar, "Crown of Hinduism"; Dennis, "Christian Missions and Social Progress," Lecture VI; Streeter, "The Message of Sadhu Sundar Singh"; Robert E. Speer, "Christianity and the Nations," ch. VI.

### Chapter XIV

T. R. Glover, "Vocation"; W. Paton, "The Missionary Motive," (Student Christian Movement), ch. VIII.

# III

## QUESTIONS SUGGESTED FOR GROUP DISCUSSION OR FOR PRIVATE STUDY

### Chapter I

1. "The attempt to conceal beneficent knowledge is of the essence of quackery." In what spheres of thought and activity is this position generally accepted to-day? 2. Are we necessarily conferring a benefit on backward peoples by introducing them to modern knowledge, machinery, industrial and commercial methods? 3. "The typical Mohammedan trader is a missionary; the typical Christian trader is not." Can you explain this? Would you justify it?

### Chapter II

1. Discuss the statement that the New Testament is a missionary book. 2. What passages in the Old Testament appealed most to Jesus? 3. What passages in the Gospels suggest that Jesus contemplated a world mission for his Gospel? What passages suggest that he thought of his message as for the Jews only? Can they be reconciled?

### Chapter III

1. In what different ways did the church spread in the first Christian generations? 2. What was the real difficulty about the reception of Gentile converts into the churches? 3. What evidence is there in Acts and in Galatians of the trouble caused by this difficulty and the way in which it was ultimately solved? 4. Does any corresponding question cause similar difficulties in our own day? 5. How far is every Christian called on to be a missionary?

### Chapter IV

1. How may we account for the general ignorance regarding pre-nineteenth century missions? 2. What features in Christianity and in the non-Christian world account for the rapidity with which Christianity spread in the early centu-

ries? 3. How may one characterize the missions of the last hundred years, as compared with those of earlier centuries? 4. How far have modern science and invention (as seen, *e. g.*, in the Suez Canal and the use of steam power) furthered missionary activity? 5. What are the objections to the use of the following as missionary weapons: (*a*) physical force, (*b*) political influence, (*c*) material inducements, (*d*) easy forms of Christianity? 6. What is the significance of the work of women missionaries?

## Chapter V

1. How should Christians view the discovery of true religious insight in the Scriptures of the non-Christians? 2. In what sense was Jesus unique? In what sense is Christianity the final religion? 3. Is there any truth in the theory that a nation inevitably works out for itself the religion best adapted to its own needs? What conception of religion underlies this theory? 4. Why is so much importance attached to the charge that Christianity denationalizes? What truth is there in the charge? 5. Is Christianity transforming our own national customs and institutions? In what direction may we expect this work to proceed?

## Chapter VI

1. What view of religion underlies (*a*) resentment of religious propaganda, (*b*) religious persecution? 2. How far is it true that our life is an expression of our creed? 3. Is it right to make a Bible lesson compulsory in mission schools and colleges? 4. How far are we justified in speaking of Western nations as Christian nations? 5. Is there any injustice in fixing on the present moment as the time at which to compare the products of different religions? 6. Why do we compare the achievements rather than the ideals of different religions? 7. How may we answer attacks on the character of Christian converts? 8. What is the influence of heaven and hell on the religious thought of this generation as compared with the last? Is the change a healthy one?

## Chapter VII

1. Has evangelization in view primarily the individual, or primarily the social group? 2. What forms did missionary work take in New Testament times? What forms does it

take to-day? Can you account for the difference? Is it pure gain? 3. Very few of the Hindu students who pass through missionary colleges in India ever declare themselves Christians. Is the labor spent on them lost, from the point of view of the church? 4. Why is so much importance attached to the establishment of a church in each country evangelized? 5. Consider how long it has taken Western countries to develop a Christian attitude to slaves, debtors, criminals, the poor, the sick, manual workers, women, and children. How should this affect our thought of the progress of Christianity in non-Christian countries?

### Chapter VIII

1. What attitude are we to take to the statement that the missionary prepares the way for the trader, or that the flag follows the Bible? 2. Can we advocate missions as making for world peace? 3. How would you distinguish between the missionary and the proselytizer? 4. Is Judaism a missionary religion? 5. What led the first missionaries to go on their journeys? 6. What class of motives is kept chiefly in view, in the official literature of missionary societies, in addresses by missionaries, in missionary biographies? How far are these appeals in accordance with the spirit of the Christian religion? 7. How far is it true to say that Christian conceptions of salvation are always changing?

### Chapter IX

1. Look at the passengers on an average ocean liner. How far may they be expected to exercise a Christian influence on any country in which they may land? 2. How far are social differences forgotten in the Western churches? Are our feelings on the color question such as to justify us in sending missionaries to colored people? 3. Is our attitude on the use of force such as we should wish to teach to non-Christian nations? 4. Is Christianity a Western religion? 5. What difficulties face the modern missionary from which the first missionaries were exempt? 6. Are there any difficulties of converts that can be solved by lowering Christian ideals?

### Chapter X

1. At what stage in the Christian development of a country can missionaries be dispensed with? 2. Discuss Protestant

sectarianism in its relation to the missionary task of the churches. 3. How far does organization tend to preserve, how far to destroy, the living spirit? 4. Should we encourage the singing of hymns like "Onward, Christian Soldiers"? 5. What is the religious importance of having accurate views on the nature of God and on the person of Christ? What was Jesus' attitude to the subject in the first three Gospels? Discuss the statement that we should sing creeds, not sign them.

### Chapter XI

1. To what extent does the average Christian believe in the unity of God? If the world as a whole enthusiastically adopted this belief, in what ways would it affect our social and international relations? 2. Is there anything local in our conception of God? Do we believe that the hand of God is seen as much in the history of China or of Africa as in that of the United States or of Canada? Have we any tendency to confine God to a particular building or a particular denomination? 3. Is there any advantage in having the church service everywhere conducted in the same language (say, Latin)? How are you affected by the use of modern colloquial English in prayer or in translations of the Bible? 4. What is the best that can be said for the use of images in worship? Is the Protestant attitude justified by experience? 5. How far is it true that the modern Christian world is delivered from the fears that have tormented the non-Christian world? What is the Christian attitude to ghosts, astrology, palmistry, crystal-gazing? 6. How far should mass movements into the Christian Church be encouraged? 7. Which is more characteristic of Christianity: the note of comfort or the call to sacrificial labor and suffering? 8. Would an average city church in North America welcome large accessions from the "slums" or from the criminal classes? What light does the answer shed on the Gospel story or on mission problems of to-day? 9. How far is the attitude of the average church member to death a Christian attitude?

### Chapter XII

1. What are the weaknesses incidental to all missionary statistical reports? What use is made of statistics in the New Testament? 2. If you visited a foreign outpost of the church, what evidence would you look for of the result of the

work of the missionaries? 3. In what different ways are Christian ideas being taken to the non-Christian world? 4. How do we justify the plethora of skilled physicians, nurses, and surgeons in the West, as compared with the scarcity of these in non-Christian countries? 5. If Orientals or Africans receive an education divorced from religion, what results may be expected? 6. When followers of the world religions gladly accept Christianity, what does this show (*a*) about Christianity, (*b*) about the followers of the world religions?

## Chapter XIII

1. We commonly divide church members into those who are "interested in missions" and those who are not. What idea of the Gospel underlies this distinction? 2. How does missionary work influence the intellectual and spiritual development of the missionary? 3. Is it the case that money spent on, and work given to, foreign missions diminish the resources of a church? 4. What light has the work of women missionaries shed on the question of the ordination of women? 5. In what ways does the study of missions make the Bible a more real book? 6. How far is it correct to say that Christianity goes out, not to destroy but to fulfil the world religions? 7. Does Christianity tend to destroy the individuality of persons or of nations? 8. What are the chief differences between modern missions and early missions? 9. What is a Christian? 10. What is our religion costing us? 11. What sides of Christianity are the young churches emphasizing?

## Chapter XIV

What kind of missionary appeal is most likely to be successful in the case of (*a*) students, (*b*) men members of the church, (*c*) women members?

## Date Due